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Analýza klíčových faktorů ovlivňujících věrnost značce

An Investigation into the Key Drivers Affecting Brand Loyalty in Relation to Next Plc.

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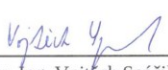
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Místopřísežně prohlašuji, že jsem celou práci, včetně příloh vypracovala samostatně.

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.....*Darina Volná*.....

Darina Volná

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Study Background

The study background for this dissertation regards fashion industry. As well as many other industries even fashion industry came through long-term process than it looked to nowadays form. Several challenges the industry had to cope with occurred which strongly influenced it and also left some marks too.

Crucial change has happened by adopting Fordist mass production in middle of 20th century which caused large fashion development. (Power and Hauge, 2008) Whereupon, a retail revolution occurred which brought a lot of retail chains entering the market. (McRobbie, 1998) By using new techniques mass production of apparel has started and caused a large volume of clothing goods on the market which gave a rise to retailers to distinguish their products from competitors. (Power and Hauge, 2008) Due to quite late adoption evoking unfamiliarity with branding techniques such as labelling clothing retailers have copied techniques from other markets having longer business experience for example from food market. (Power and Hauge, 2008) In consequence of fast-evolving clothing firms and technological boom, higher designed fashion which was affordable for average income consumers was available on the British market and due to wider range of goods, the process of social fragmentation was intensified during 1980's. (McRobbie, 1998) More distinguished products, stronger consumer taste to be different has appeared as a mark of their individuality. (McRobbie, 1998) Power and Hauge (2008) point out the origin of brand-building and management on the market has become evident since couples of world-wide fashion houses and luxury goods companies were found also in 1980's. By using cautious brand management some entrepreneurs of luxury goods firms such as Giorgio Armani or Gianni Versace tried to develop such a strong fashion brands which would resist a caprice of fluid and erratic fashion thus the brand was turned into dominated position of key issue in fashion industry. (Power and Hauge, 2008) This approach encourages following quote of one participating fashion entrepreneur.

“The clothes might change but you can still trust Armani to make you look good.”

Giorgio Armani

McRobbie (1998) highlights the emergence of fashion industry in last three decades of 20th century which is obvious by huge change from locally and craft-based industry to nowadays global scope. In the fashion industry recent approach of brand valuing is noticeable in that due to strong competition firms need exploiting various branding strategies if intending to stay on the market. (Power and Hauge, 2008) Gale et al (2004) underline that fashion companies cannot be run without using these branding techniques as having essential impact on creating brand perception in consumer minds as directly influence on sequent success or failure of the business. Putting more stress on diversity of fashion instead of concentrating on price competition has been seen as great progress forward whereby the nature of clothing market started to modify for reasons of changes in relationships with suppliers or in consumer perception too. (Nixon, 1996) In terms of consumer perception firms tend to insert positive impression in their brands for example to connect them with “world-wide fashion locations” such as Milan or Paris. (Power and Hauge, 2008)

“What fashion does is advertise the city or the country as a whole. So fashion works in this way, it is about creating an image. This is not unique to Britain, it is exactly what Armani does on a much bigger scale. His image and his name are exported across the world- he is Italy.”

Member of the British Fashion Council in August 1993.

Contrary to Italy, UK has much fixed fashion market with only few participants as the big earners. (Easey, 2009) Whereupon Mintel (2011) determined the top three UK retailers are M&S, NEXT and Arcadia Group in terms of their market shares. Moreover Gale et al (2004) mention recent trends causing entering of big initially fashion retailers to other industries as for instance M&S does by participating in the food market or also NEXT which will be introduced below.

To summarize this part it is important to mention there are no doubts that recently brands become main players on world-wide fashion market and also latest process of building brands and brand loyalty fundamentally affects the dynamics of whole fashion industry.

1.2. Study Area

Next Plc is one of the biggest and most important UK based retailer already mentioned above which entering to other industries by providing its own range of devices, accessories and interior products although it began as mainstream fashion chain. Three main channels are using for distribution namely Next Retail, Next Directory and Next International. (NEXT, 2011) Next Retail possesses over 500 stores in the UK and Ireland, Next Directory provides catalogues for convenient shopping at home and official web sites where almost three million active clients signed in and finally Next International with over 180 stores world-wide. (NEXT, 2011)

The Next retail chain was founded in February 1982 and the first store opened at the time an epochal retail concept, introducing organized collections of own branded ladies' apparel and accessories in boutique-style shopping environments. (NEXT, 2011) Since the early, the brand was regarded as affordably priced with an attracting combination of distinctive style, good quality and value with a collection of fully-fashioned clothes, shoes and accessories for women. (NEXT, 2011) Subsequently men's collections were established in 1984, children's in 1987 and finally home collections in 1985 which were met with great success and transfigured the British high street which turned Next Plc into all-embracing lifestyle brand. (McRobbie, 1998) The pioneer mail order operation Next Directory initiated in 1988 with a hard-back book creating the concept for catalogue retailing. (NEXT, 2011) Online shopping was launched in 1999 where all-inclusive book is available in order to shop on the internet, which provided first in-home shopping in the UK nowadays serving customers in more than 35 countries outside the UK via its international web sites, NextDirect.com. (NEXT, 2011)

The company success is supported by data which has been recently published determining Next Plc as being second most frequently visited concerning a purchase-making of apparel on the UK fashion market. (Mintel, 2011)

1.3. Dissertation Structure

The whole dissertation is divided into six main chapters. First, regarding introduction to the field of study which providing some historic information about entire industry or NEXT Plc itself and also principle aim and objectives are introduced in this part. Second chapter is literature review which will bring theoretical base of overall study where many key words, theories and issues connected with the topic will be described whereby necessary knowledge and information for following part will be acquired. Third chapter involves methodology where data collection, methods and techniques and steps of research will be introduced. Fourth section, results, will demonstrate all aspects of findings obtaining on the basis of prior research which will be subsequently discussed and analysed in next fifth chapter, discussion. Last part of dissertation is conclusion which will draw final overview of researched matter where some recommendations will be disclosed as well.

1.4. Aim and Objectives

This section will provide main aim and several objectives of this paper. This topic was chosen by researcher according to her interest in marketing field, great passion for fashion sector and finally inquisitiveness to issue of brand loyalty in general.

Aim:

- To analyse and evaluate the key drivers most affecting brand loyalty

Objectives:

- To research a degree of customer loyalty and satisfaction with NEXT Plc.
- To identify the influence of marketing communications on customers
- To define core customer of NEXT Plc on the basis of ascertained loyalty and satisfaction with the brand
- To detect managerial view of entire matter of customer loyalty

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter relevant literature sources are discussed in order to introduce some theoretical background and accumulate necessary knowledge about particular field of this study to better comprehend following sections.

2.2.Fashion Theories

The evolution of fashion industry and the changes occurred in history has been already described above whilst fashion process itself still needs to be clarified by introducing some fashion theories. Solomon and Rabolt (2009) emphasize the **elaborateness of fashion process** having macro and social effect on a lot of people in parallel and also on individual behaviour. Moreover, Gale et al (2004) underline the cohesion of cultural framework and fashion and need for being aware of local cultural differences which might have a great influence on the achievement of a particular style of clothing. Authors concentrate on five main fashion theories trying to interpret the phenomena, thus help in predicting the future of clothing. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.1.1. Collective Selection

First theory is denominated collective selection by reason that fashion can be seen as a type of collective behaviour or inclination to social allegiance as several sociologists claim. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009) It was noticeable while for instance miniskirts boom has happened where the argument was how so many people could be obsessed with one kind of apparel all of a sudden however, this enthusiasm for it is attributed by sociologists to this collective behaviour. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.1.1. Trickle-down Theory

Secondly, Solomon and Rabolt (2009) describe a trickle-down theory, which stands on class stratification in the past and basically it deals with two groups of people namely superiors and subordinates who make effort to copy the status of those who are above

them due to moving upward on the ladder of social mobility. Nevertheless, prevalent styles rising from superior groups trickle down to groups below and consequently, higher classes keep watching lower ones and assume even newer fashion to avoid being imitated. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.1.2. Trickle-across Theory

Thirdly, the trickle-across, when the entire theory concerns current modern society with volume of individualised choice and essentially, the availability of information is the same within all classes. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.1.3. Trickle-up Theory

Fourth theory regards the opposite flow of information hence it begins with lower classes and proceeds to higher ones and as a typical example of this theory is the birth of jeans, which initially used to be wear by miners and farmers and later on the designers turned them into favourite present look. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.1.4. Meme Theory

Finally, Meme theory concerning consumer rapid decision-changing that once it hits the rate of critical mass, some consumers have to quickly switch one product for another and this rate is often called as tipping point. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009:26)

Gladwell (2001) compares these sudden consumer actions to viruses due to fast messages transmission to huge amount of people rapidly thus they can be captivated by new fashion trends.

Several fashion theories were described for reasons they have apparent impact on decision-making process of consumers which is heading to the study of consumer behaviour.

2.2. Consumer Behaviour

First of all the definition needs to be indicated.

‘Consumer behaviour reflects the totality of consumers’ decisions with respect the acquisition, consumption, and disposition of goods, services, activities, experiences, people, and ideas by decision-making units over time.’

Hoyer and MacInnis (2010:3)

In addition, Hoyer and MacInnis (2010) explain there are advantages of investigation into consumer behaviour such as furnishing critical information which definitely comes in useful to managers to improve marketing strategies and tactics considering acquisition then consumption and sequent disposal happening over time what bears evidence of dynamism.

Also Peter and Olson (2010) emphasize a dynamic process of consumer behaviour due to constant turns and transformations not merely in individual consumer doings or targeted consumer groups but also in entire society. This dynamism raises a need for creating new or developing existing marketing strategies which could be quite often found very tricky because no specific example of marketing strategy works on every market anytime due to be shaped in term of companies’ mission, market, environment and so on. (Peter and Olson, 2010) Due to nowadays shortening of product life cycle companies are made to respond quickly for current situation on the market such as adapting existing marketing strategies to newly invented products. (Peter and Olson, 2010) Further, intercommunication between consumers and the marketers should be able to appraise the value to provided products and brands and last but not least marketers need to comprehend what most affect customers’ shopping, purchases and consumption because the greater amount of information about these interactions and their impacts they can obtain, the more satisfied their customer will be. (Peter and Olson, 2010) On this basis the cohesion of marketing and consumer behaviour is irreversible.

2.2.1. Influence on Marketing

Solomon (2009) and Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) agree that there has been great progress in behaviour of recent marketers. According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) the subject of consumer behaviour is stemmed from marketing strategy developed in 1950s, when some marketers noticed the production of just required products could bring a bigger profit quite effortlessly, rather than convincing them to buy redundant goods. Since customer needs and wants, got proper attention in the firms, the customer-oriented marketing approach became well known as the marketing concept. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007) Solomon (2009) describes nowadays marketers are aware of utmost importance of building relationship with consumers and come to realize that a key to success is inhered in this building relationship and it has a lifetime value.

2.2.2. Relationship Marketing

Sherman and Perlman (2007) compare process of building relationship to a business marriage which starts once the sale was made. The character and development of this marriage is relied on seller's capabilities to solve a problem if appears, alternatively this relationship is heading forward business "divorce". (Sherman and Perlman, 2007) Authors also point out that salesmen should signify continual interest in keeping this relationship as smooth as possible by keeping customers updated and by being beware of all possible inconveniencies. (Sherman and Perlman, 2007) However, possible troubles might actually prove seller's ability to face correctly random problems thus increases customer trust. (Sherman and Perlman, 2007)

According to Sherman and Perlman (2007) this approach is known as relationship marketing and it consists in sufficient motivating customers to stay within company as time goes on. Stone et al. (2000) and Sherman and Perlman (2007) agree and highlight a relevant aspect of relationship marketing efficiency and point out the fact of being cheaper to take care about existing customers than trying to capture new ones. Sherman and Perlman (2007) and Solomon (2009) agree that the development of business relationship with buyers is seen as a keystone to selling success and it is also

fundamental not just in terms of making repeat purchases but being able to set up new business via references from existing customers as well.

2.2.3. Fashion Marketing

Easey (2009) underlines crucial role of consumer behaviour in fashion marketing due to many methods of reflecting upon customers provided. It is principal to comprehend of consumer needs to detect right target market not only in fashion industry. (Easey, 2009) Moreover, the emergence of marketing mixes, which consists of four Ps such as product, price, promotion and place and by all these factors marketers put on the target market, is more than obvious. (Easey, 2009) Due to erratic fashion itself even fashion marketing has been found as very fast-paced environment with promptly made transactions and on grounds of its changeability some prognosis are required. (Sherman and Perlman, 2007)

2.2.4. Fashion Forecasting

Yu et al (2011) emphasize continuous trend which is time-dependent and clarify the fashion trend variability by which people tend to lose their interest of predominant fashion so they steadily look for new one. Yu et al (2011) and Clodfelter (2009) agree that forecasting the fashion has one fundamental role in fashion industry. Although, Choi and Sethi (2010) consider being capable of more flexible, adaptable and responsive to current situation as an absolute advantage which facilitate how to survive on the marketplace of fashion world. Creating successful fashion products of attractive design for many customers is tough process requesting clear identifying target market if worthy forecast is intended. (Chan, 2000 and Easey 2009) To analyse accuracy of forecasted trends several aspects can be selected however, Easey (2009) suggest monitoring sales performances.

2.2.4.1. Models and Methods of Forecasting

Many studies with plenty of models and methods have been applied have not been founded very conducive, otherwise some studies shows model based on neural networks to be working in this area. (Ni & Fan, 2011) Au, Choi and Yu (2008) have determined

the evolutionary neural network (ENN) as a method presenting very acceptably exact forecasting in spite of many factors affecting fashion such as weather changes and promotion actions. The EEN method is based on training a neural network with past data and subsequently using this network for foreseeing future values. (Au, Choi and Yu, 2008)

However, Easey (2009) underlines that in fashion industry will always play main role intuition and so-called gut feeling about the market notwithstanding, the use of studies takes important post in forecasting as well. Additionally, Gale et al (2004) express that the success of fashion designer mainly stands on being able to feel out, estimate and conceive the shifts which are coming.

2.2.5. Market Segmentation

As mentioned, the efficient forecasting is conditional on right targeting which is provided by segmentation process. The concept of market segmentation defines ‘segments’ signifying a group of people with similar characteristics where each segment should contain similar motives, values and needs to purchase. (Blackwell et al., 2001) Machkova (2006) groups these characteristics into following categories:

2.2.5.1. Market Characteristics

Those involve geographic, demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. (Machkova, 2006) Some examples of each category are introduced:

- Geographic: countries, cities size, population density
- Demographic: gender, age, family structure
- Socioeconomic: education, social class and income

2.2.5.2. Behavioural Characteristics

These characteristics are worse measurable than previous ones regarding categories such as lifestyle, value or brand loyalty.

2.2.5.3. Positioning

Machkova (2006) defines positioning in terms of brand as a explaining of brand position among competitors on the market, with the aim of preserve chosen position in customer minds. Subsequently, positioning becomes customer perception of seeing firm position on the market when required image should emphasize benefits and differentiation from competition. (Hoyer and McInnis, 2010)

2.2.5.4. Targeting

Hill and Beery (2009) highlight that the determining target customers, is fundamental to success of marketing campaigns. By using geo-demographic, socioeconomic and behavioural characteristics data from segmentation process, it is possible to profile more precisely the target consumers. (Hill and Beery, 2009)

2.2.6. Why Consumers Buy

Consumers of same segments resulting from segmentation process tend to buy similar goods although to find out what drives them to buy is essential outcome for marketers as already claimed. Clodfelter (2009) reminds pivotal information of finding these drivers for example when firm plan advertising campaigns and further determines three groups of buying motives.

2.2.6.1. Rational Motives

First motives harmonize with physiological needs on Maslow's Hierarchy on Figure 1 which consumers lean to fulfil foremost then they will try to satisfy needs on the higher level. (Clodfelter, 2009) Author deemed that rational buying motives were logically based and he identifies which motives suit in this group for example economy, savings, reliability, and so on. However, Solomon (2009) argues that customers carefully contemplate product with all obtained information and then on this ground they render a decision if buy or not. If these motives are comprehended by marketing managers, consumer required criteria of product-choice could be supplemented which will turn them into such products with adequate features, with suited advertising strategies which will hit and become undesirable for target customers. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

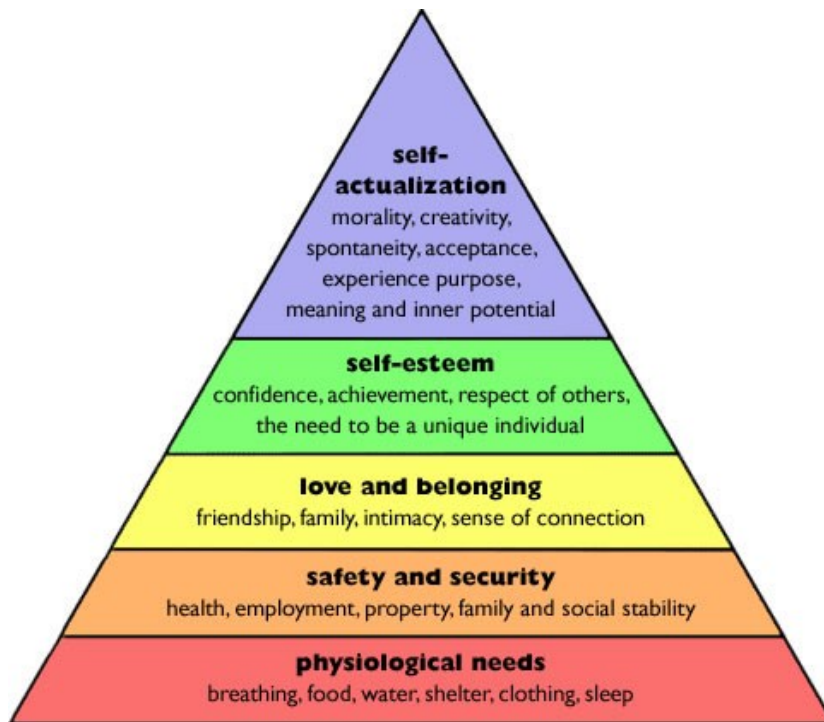


Figure 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
Source: Schop (2009)

2.2.6.2. Emotional Motives

Clodfelter (2009) and Solomon and Rabolt (2009) agree that emotional buying motives consist in preferring customers feelings instead of using logical thought for instance social acceptance, self-esteem or curiosity which might be influenced by physical surroundings or product placement.

2.2.6.3. Patronage Motives

Finally, Clodfelter (2009) determine patronage buying motives which clarify why customers give precedence to one store, brand, product over another, thus these information can provide crucial findings for retailers. Clodfelter (2009) identifies several but only two main factors will be introduced:

- *Services offered* which is especially provided to differentiate themselves from competitors for instance offering free delivery, gift wrapping and so on

- *Experienced and courteous associates* who essentially encompass nice, polite and skilled sales assistants and other members of staff who participate in creating the image of business which retailers hardly try to evolve

All motives why to buy are stimuli in the process of making decision which is intended to be explained in next section.

2.2.7. Types of Consumer Decisions

Solomon and Rabolt (2009) have stated three main types of consumer decisions which will be explained whereas the process of making decision itself will be clarified in next part.

2.2.7.1. Extended problem solving

This behaviour contains high risk and involvement because consumers tend to endeavour for collecting a lot of information before purchasing particular product, as they take into consideration all elements and features of these products and evaluate them very carefully and on this basis to make their decision. (Solomon, 2009)

2.2.7.2. Limited problem solving

Second types of behaviour is especially more outspoken and elementary, where consumers do have less motivation to inquire about products and they also often do not pay enough attention to assess chance to buy some other alternatives. (Solomon, 2009)

2.2.7.3. Habitual decision making

Third one does not include any degree of involvement such as finding provided information and subsequent product evaluation and consequently buying particular products is seen as routine which consumers are unaware of. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009) According to Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) this behaviour can be divided into two groups: brand loyal decisions and repeat purchase decisions.

- Brand Loyal Purchase

It consists in choosing particular brand for example of shampoo and having this chosen aim as an outcome of this process, customer might buy it incontinently and due to trust, that it fulfils their needs and the favour for this product turns customer in brand loyal heading towards putting great effort of competitor to obtain this customer's favour. (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010)

- Repeat Purchases

Contrary, customer sees no difference between same types of products of various brands for example milk chocolate, by trying Cadbury milk chocolate and being adequate satisfied, customer buys it anytime he or she needs it without being dedicated to it so this customers is considered as a repeat purchaser. (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010)

2.2.7.4. *Heuristic decision-making*

Other type of decision- making has been found. Jansson-Boyd (2010) emphasize that naturally consumers contemplate just small amount of obtainable information regarding specific product or service for reasons such as lack of time to face with bulk information about goods they are interested in therefore, consumers may treat some information bit differently than others which is caused by heuristics connected with subconscious acting which provide relatively easy way of decision-making. (Jansson-Boyd, 2010) Nevertheless, some difficulties have been discovered such as they often result in error and bias caused by using just one particular piece of information such as perfect confidence in someone's recommendation without considering own need and wishes about product. Eventually, Solomon (2009) also points this dilemma out what perfectly suit one customer does not directly signify that the same product will evoke full satisfaction at another customer.

2.2.8. *Stages being experienced during extended decision-making process*

It was principle to identify the types of decisions first to describe following process thereby fashion area has been analysed as considering extended solving problem

category for reasons being risky and also it belongs to high-involvement group (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009). The whole process needs to go through certain stages.

2.2.8.1. Problem recognition

Firstly, Solomon and Rabolt (2009) and Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) agree that problem recognition appears when consumers realize considerable gap between their actual state of issue and ideal state and at this time consumer is aware of appearance of problem and have a need to deal with it. Further, two types of recognition when the first one concerns actual state which is to decrease or almost to be exhausted thus via purchasing new product even not as suitable as old one the need will be satisfied. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009) While second opportunity recognition appears, when consumer encounters various or higher quality products it refers to fashion items whose purchasers are well known for quite frequent mind-changing. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.2.8.2. Information search

Secondly, Solomon and Rabolt (2009) underline once a consumer recognize a problem in first stage of process it is necessary to collect appropriate information in order to resolve it by analysing his or her environment for relevant data to make a sensible decision. Although, Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) add that this relevant data can consumer also obtain from own past experience and help in making present choice. Solomon and Rabolt (2009) mention many consumers like searching for information and watching trends because it keeps them amused or they need to be well-informed about current situation in the marketplace.

2.2.8.2.1. Types of sources

Solomon (2009) and Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) classify information sources into internal and external ones. Authors agree that for consumer is usual to recollect own past experience, which are regarded as internal sources, if there is no prior experience afterwards they start using external sources such as advertisements, articles, friends and

so on. (Solomon, 2009 and Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007) It is also important to mention how great influence internet has on information search, by providing very easy way to gain huge amount of information whereby due to this modern media even companies are advantageous by reason having possibility to detect the number of users who have looked for their brand names (Solomon, 2009)

2.2.8.2.2. Fashion Information Sources

Solomon and Rabolt (2009) highlight whereas fashion is able to change very quickly, consumer knowledge turns to be not-updated so rapidly, therefore those, consumers who are interested in fashion have several kinds of fashion source how to stay aware. Solomon and Rabolt (2009) determine four fashion information sources.

- *Impersonal sources* contain window displays, fashion magazines and catalogues, newspaper, radio and television advertisements, fashion shows and so on. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)
- *Personal sources* include talks with friends, watching people during social assembly or public places. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)
- *Neutral sources* concern television performers, film stars or eminent people in the news. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)
- *Objective sources* comprise large quality of product information from a lot of web sites, especially which have been sought after by consumers before visiting stores or purchasing. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

Solomon and Rabolt (2009) underline the difference between consumers in volume of search which they attach to such as being better-educated or those, who found shopping entertaining incline to assemble more information whereas women are often more disposed to search than men. Without reference to volume of search some consumers

involve in brand-switching causing they tend to switch brands despite their full satisfaction probably due to gaining new experience and they amuse seeking variety what explain the existence of innovators which is obvious specifically in fashion industry. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.2.8.3. Identifying Alternatives

Having access to such a huge amount of information without question, hundreds of available product alternatives do exist. Reducing number of product alternatives and making decision about criteria which are the most crucial, lies in decision-making process. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) describe two types of information when consumers evaluate potential alternatives. First one is kind of list of brands from which customers will make their product-choice and second type regards criteria which they will use for evaluation of alternatives. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007) There have been detected three sets playing principal role in identifying alternatives exhibited in Figure 2.

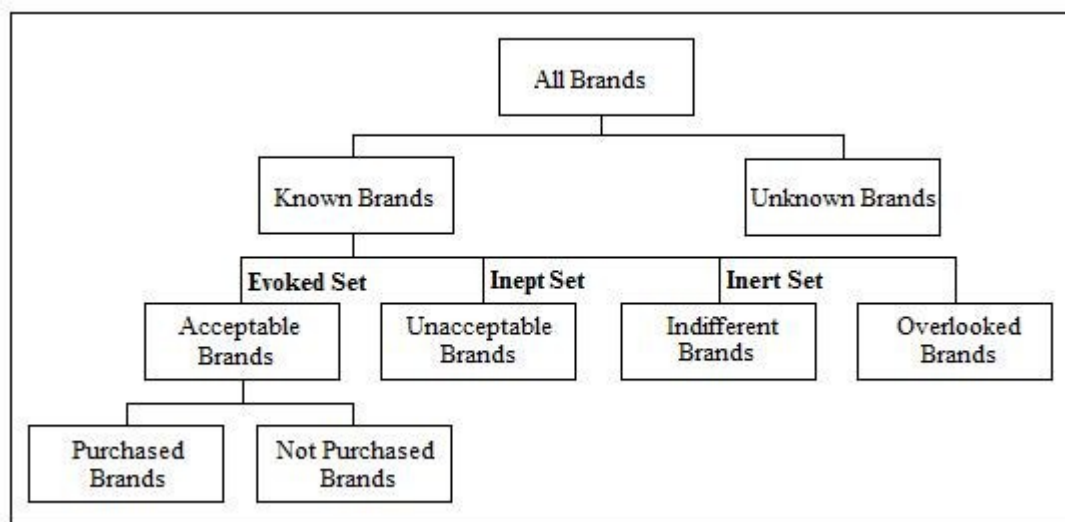


Figure 2: The Consumer's Decision-Making Process
Source: Schiffman and Kanuk (2007:560)

- Evoked Set

Firstly, this category concerns alternatives which were considered by customers in their purchase-making and includes products which are already in memory so-called retrieval set and also those, preferable in the retail environment. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007; Solomon, 2009). The evoked set mostly three to five brands and as far as the brand is not included, otherwise marketers should start being worried and also they are supposed to make sure that the products greatly perform if not the product image may be damaged by poor perceived quality and will not meet performance expectations. (Solomon, 2009)

- Inept Set

It regards the alternatives which are customers aware of but the purchase has not been made because these brands did not meet the requirements or customers are simply apathetic to them. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007)

- Inert Set

It includes these brands do not manage to enter the game at all or customers could see them as inferior. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007)

2.2.8.4.Product-Choice: Selecting Among Alternatives

Finally, once relevant options have been collected final decision between them has to be made. Decision rules guiding consumer's choices may be dependent on either simple or quick strategies or elaborate processes and the choice itself can be affected for example by previous experience with the product or even beliefs about brand evoked on the basis of promotion. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.2.8.4.1. Evaluative criteria

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) advert to criteria which need to be evaluated by consumers represent their evoked sets and they are mostly organized in important

product attributes order where the attributes playing the most essential role are determinant attributes. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

2.2.8.4.2. Evaluative criteria used in fashion decisions

Solomon and Rabolt (2009) sum up several studies which are concerned with fashion decisions and they have regarded criteria in light of extrinsic factors which represent price, brand name and store image and intrinsic factors such as comfort, style, colour, quality, fit.

Solomon and Rabolt (2009) underline that some specific evaluative criteria used could be universal therefore they mostly are unlike among people or across culture as well.

Above, many times the use of various communication techniques was mentioned as fundamental instrument of interaction with consumers which help to build desired relationship which will leave mark in consumer minds therefore various types of communications will be introduced.

2.2.9. *Marketing Communications*

Due relation to dissertation topic one element of marketing mix will be discussed namely promotion. Arens (2002) describes that the communication aspect contains all marketing-related communications among the seller and the buyer. There are many communications tools but only five main ones will be discussed. They can be divided into personal such as personal selling and non-personal activities, where advertising, direct marketing, public relations and sales promotion belong. (Arens, 2002)

2.2.9.1. *Personal Selling*

It regards face-to-face communication when marketer comes to know directly about customer wants and needs and supporting subsequent customer irresistibility to buy. (Arens, 2002)

2.2.9.2. Advertising

It is current tool to inform, persuade and remind customers about particular product or services. (Arens, 2002:192)

2.2.9.3. Direct Marketing

Just one strategy thus direct-response advertising is considered for being relevant to topic of dissertation. Arens (2002) indicates the most known tools of direct-response advertising which are following:

- *Direct mail* is personally addressed advertising via post heading to build personal relationship with customer (Chris, 2009)
- *Catalogues sales* where catalogues have a long history as a technique of selling by which is achieved wide range of products (Bianco, no date)
- *Direct-response print advertising* is considered as effective way how to excite customers responses using newspapers and magazines reaching particular target customers with high-quality presentation (Arens, 2002)
- *Broadcast advertising* regarding TV and radio which has become heavily used in latest years.
- *Interactive media* headed by Internet, doubtlessly have experienced huge progress in recent years and symbolize new form of interactive marketing communications. (Chris, 2009) Stone et al. (2000) indicate a key feature of the Internet as a having easy access to customer management data by which is possible to maximize company value. Moreover, Bianco (no date) underline benefits in terms of customers having much more elementary way how to search and collect information via Internet.

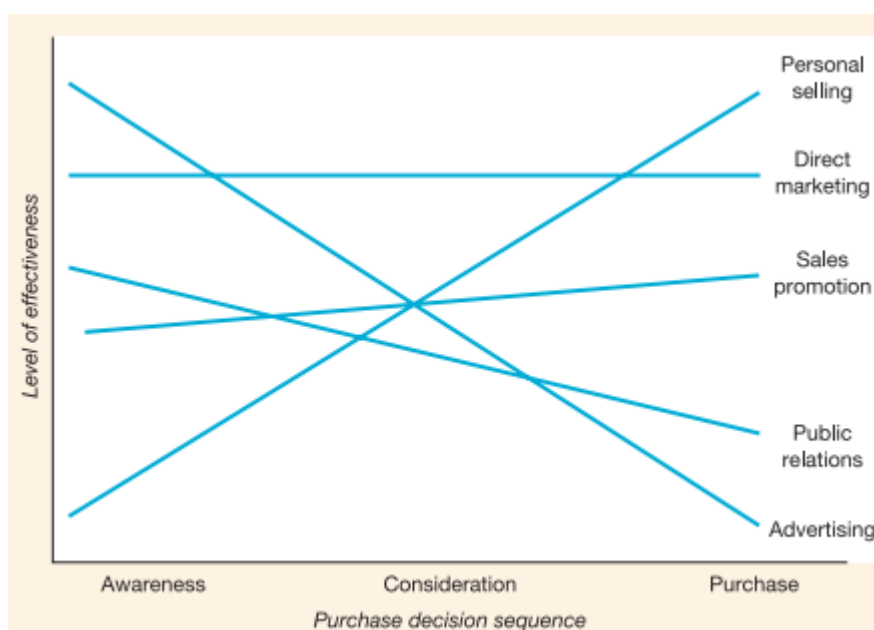
2.2.9.4. Public Relations

A lot of companies tend to support their advertising with different public relations activities for instance publicity specifically new releases, and special events especially company tours or grand openings to manifest dissimilar audience there are present thus to create corporate credibility and image. (Arens, 2002)

2.2.9.5.Sales Promotion

It includes varied marketing techniques in order to provide better offer for purpose of principal aim which is to increase sales and collect marketing information. (Arens, 2002) It is connected mostly with the communications function of the marketing mix involving for example displays or trading stamps in contrast with the rest. (Arens, 2002)

Further, Chris (2009) compares various types of communications tools and finds advertising being better for awareness creation while personal selling consider being more appropriate at promotion action and purchase behaviour exhibit in the Graph 1.



Graph 1: The Relative Effectiveness of Tools of the Marketing Communications mix
Source: Chris (2009:25)

Although Chris (2009) points out and appends one more tool which is the most effective and powerful type of marketing communications namely word-of-mouth recommendation.

Finally, it is substantial to signify recent trends using celebrities in order promote brands and its stylish garments being considered as very powerful marketing tool by which customer attention can be widely reached implying brand awareness expansion and it also has crucial impact on brand perception and reputation too. (Gale et al, 2004)

In addition, there is huge amount of consumers who would start falling for particular brand just because of well-known celebrities appeared in the adverts. (Gale et al, 2004)

With no use of different channels of marketing communications to promote the brand and thus create its awareness, perception or even vary one from other the branding process will not be successfully managed.

2.2.10. Branding

The essential importance was attributed to this subject in the introduction. Davis (2010) underlines branding which is seen as responsibility of the whole organization because perception of the brand is directly or indirectly affected by every person and every department. Easy (2009) highlights fundamental role due the ability to distinguish one retailer from another.

2.2.11. Levels of Branding

On the basis of research has determined five levels of branding displayed in pyramid in Figure 8 where the higher number companies obtain the better quality and level of branding can company operate with. (Davis, 2010)

Davis (2010) agrees with statement that investing in various marketing programs can be financially unbearable therefore he raises a question of price-cutting per customer due to using new media instead of traditional ways such as print campaigns which may guarantee many competitive brands the on market.

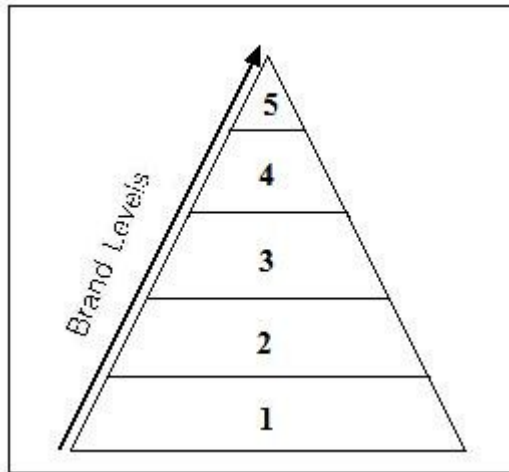


Figure 3: Brand Levels

Source: Davis (2010: 19)

2.2.11.1. First Level

First level of branding has been classified as ‘poor branded’ and rated by number one. (Davis, 2010) This level mostly concerns small and mid-sized firms with brand identity, which is mainly undetermined or even missing. (Davis, 2010) The web sites are very basic if and in term of size first level firms are especially local based and frequented by narrow group of customers and any special reputation has not been detected. (Davis, 2010)

2.2.11.2. Second Level

At second level firms hold noticeable basic identity such as logos, slogans or some elementary adverts. (Davis, 2010) The distension of businesses is more diverse than previous level and also more customers have notion about these local, niche and several regional companies. (Davis, 2010)

2.2.11.3. Third Level

At this level firms operate with more various marketing communication for example radio advertising or elaborate web sites are used hence this category can already include local, regional or even national based firms in their home country. (Davis, 2010)

2.2.11.4. *Forth Level*

Forth level companies are already familiarized with using varied marketing communication tools and advanced product management providing professional image. (Davis, 2010) Dominant part belongs to national or international companies with worthy reputation based on high quality with very familiar public with these firms by having close contact. (Davis, 2010)

2.2.11.5. *Fifth Level*

Finally, fifth level contains companies which are able to permanently imprint their brands in diversified customers' mind. (Davis, 2010) The excellent use of broad range of marketing is truly glaring causing that only biggest global brands being brand leaders in their industries are contained here. (Davis, 2010)

The urgency of exploiting branding techniques has been explained thus it leads to last main theoretical part which explores the brand itself and also relating subjects connected with.

2.3. Brand

2.3.1. *Definition of Brand*

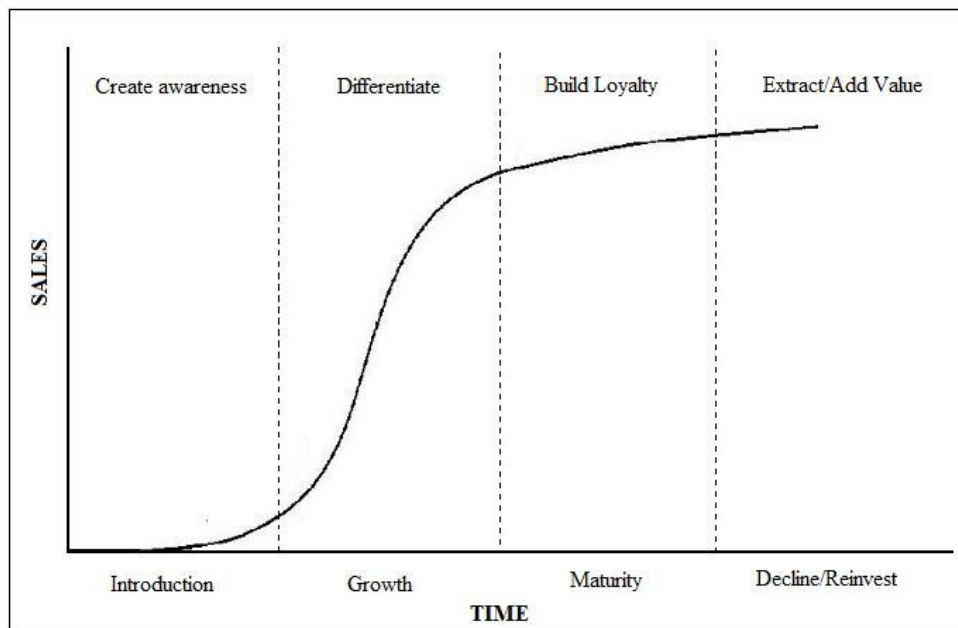
Davies (2010) briefly specifies brands as “symbols, slogans, logos, and or advertising campaigns” mediating information via countless amount of formulas and associations. Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy & Pervan (2011) argue the etymology of the word, which is originated from Old Norwegian word “brandr” and the initial meaning is “permanent mark deliberately made with hot iron.” Whilst Gale et al (2004) determine the purpose of brand labels and logos by which are recognized from competitor's substitutes. Further, there is already alluded importance of marketing communication which provides prevalent amount of information about brand. (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy & Pervan, 2011)

Moreover, Davis (2010) expresses possibility of disappearance of brands with no advertising at all and underline the need for existence of some level of public awareness for a brand. As Rosenbaum-Elliot, Percy & Pervan (2011) indicate that marketing communication contributes to increase awareness for a brand and it makes it “meaning”. The positive brand name and attitude are key elements to induct and sustain the required meaning of brand which leads to form brand equity introduced in next chapter. (Rosenbaum-Elliot, Percy & Pervan, 2011)

2.3.2. Brand Lifecycle

Davis (2010) adopts the classic product lifecycle model for brand lifecycle which helps exploring the company brand planning bent on differentiation. A brand has to come through four stages: Introduction, growth, maturity and decline as Graph 2 demonstrates. (Davis, 2010) Although recently stages are getting shorten as already specified.

- *Introduction* is essential to build awareness to obtain new customers. (Davis, 2010)
- *Growth* where due to broader marketing campaigns message can largely spread to attract more customers. (Davis, 2010)
- *Maturity* considering the existence of many competitors which leads to raise brand varieties and benefits in order to produce customer loyalty. (Davis, 2010)
- *Decline or Reinvest* causing return to initial choice by reforming product via additional innovation or divestment. (Davis, 2010)



Graph 2: Brand Lifecycle
Source: Davis (2010: 155)

2.3.3. Brand Equity

Brady et al. (2008) briefly explain brand equity in light of an individual consumer as an implication of knowledge which is held about brand and it is shaped by its “meaning” as pointed above. The knowledge about brand is considered as a network of associations such as brand beliefs, attitudes and perceptions about for example image and quality. (Brady et al., 2008) However, Vazquez et al. (2002) rather describe brand equity in terms of the entire utility which is associated with customer using and consumption of the brand.

Aaker (1996) has stated five dimensions of brand equity: brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand associations, brand awareness and brand assets, whereas brand loyalty is considered as a core dimension of brand equity. A loyal customer base represents a barrier to entry, a basis for a price premium, time to respond to competitor innovations and protection against harmful price competition. (Aaker, 1996:106) Price premium is customer willingness to pay extra for product of particular brand with similar benefits as substitutes which is seen as an indicator of brand loyalty. (Aaker, 1996)

2.3.3.1. Brand Equity Connections

Nam et al. (2011) have identified close connection between customer satisfaction, brand equity and brand loyalty which is exhibited in full mediation model below.

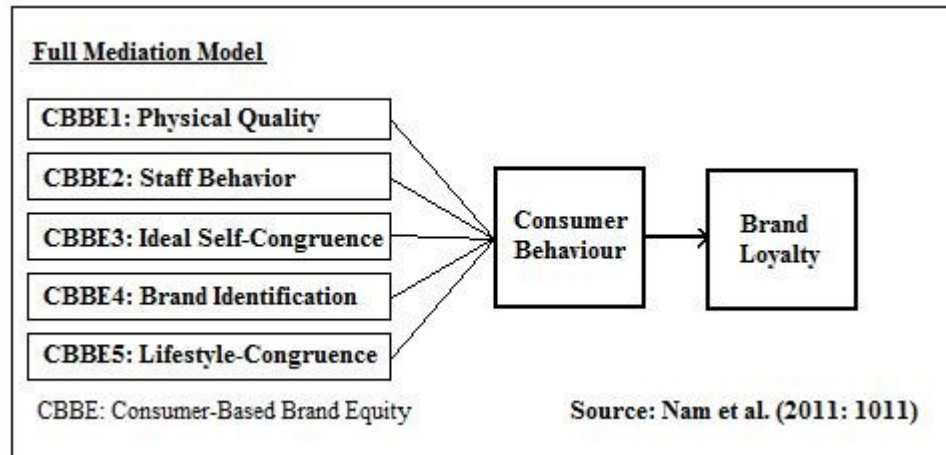


Figure 4: Full Mediation Model
Source: Nam et al. (2011:1011)

However, Nam et al. (2011) have used different diversification of brand equity dimensions than previous author and have divided them into physical quality, staff behaviour, ideal self-congruence, brand identification and lifestyle-congruence depicted in figure 3 where the model shows direct positive effect of dimensions of consumer-based brand equity on consumer behaviour heading towards brand loyalty. Having in customer mind good experiences with brand, their loyalty becomes stronger. (Nam et al., 2011)

Important connection between customer satisfaction and brand equity confirms other model founded by Torres and Tribo (2011) which contains shareholder value aspect as Figure 4 manifests.

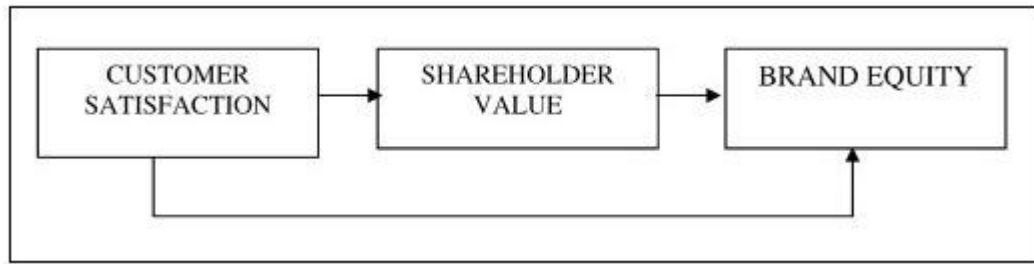


Figure 5: Partial Mediation by Shareholder Value in the connection from Customer Behaviour to Brand Equity

Source: Torres and Tribo (2011:1090)

To clarify introduced connection the numbers of reasons have been analysed. First, satisfied customers are more loyal, less sensitive to price alternation, and more likely to involve in positive word-of-mouth behaviours. (Torres and Tribo, 2011) And secondly, loyal and satisfied customers reduce risk and variability of business which bring shareholders many benefits. (Torres and Tribo, 2011)

The brand equity contains the network of associations with brand which also eventuates in forming a brand perception.

2.3.4. Brand Perception

Davis (2010) in brief describes perception as a process which relieve to be aware of something what is ignited by diversity of stimuli such as people, marketing communications, experiences, emotions and so on. Davis (2010) considers that diverse forms of stimuli evoke several associations with the brand which might cause a lot of various answers from customers because of dissimilar experience or emotions.

Further, forming of positive perception as an essential step to become successful company where company managers should take care of pleasant working environment because all employees contributes to shaping brand perception as well. (Davis, 2010) As specified above customer with positive perception and brand equity may be predisposed to be loyal to brand in the future.

2.3.5. Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty has a close relationship with brand equity and customer satisfaction and it is also one of the type habitual decision-making described by Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010). Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) explain brand loyalty as the most desired reaction of consumer learning.

Aaker and McLoughlin (2010) point out some advantages of having a loyal customer base which brings competitive advantages for various reasons. First, cutting down of marketing costs due to already mentioned fact keeping existing customers is cheaper. (Aaker and McLoughlin, 2010) Secondly, existing customer loyalty becomes an essential entry barrier to competitors and thirdly, satisfied customer creates positive image of a brand whereas final reason consists in offering enough time to company to make a competitive moves. (Aaker and McLoughlin, 2010)

According to marketers brand loyalty contains attitudes and actual behaviour to a brand which must be measurable thus two types of measures are provided. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007)

2.3.5.1. Attitudinal Measures of Brand Loyalty

It regards consumers' entire feelings about the product and the brand and the purchase they intend to make. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007)

2.3.5.2. Behavioural Measures of Brand Loyalty

Those are related to observation of responses to advertisement stimuli such as repeat purchase. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007) Behavioural measures can cause inaccuracy because it is not considered the difference between the true brand loyal buyer who deliberately made a purchase and the spurious brand-loyal buyer who made a purchase for reasons such as not-having another choice at a store. Consumers also tend to buy products from a range of brands containing in already explained evoked set where the more acceptable brands the set involves, the less loyal customer is. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007)

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) use the framework on the Figure 5 to measure customer loyalty in terms of an individual's relative attitudes composed of the strength of attitude and the measure of attitudinal divergence of competing brand towards an entity such as brand or service, and patronage behaviour driven by patronage motives discussed above. Brand loyal customer has high relative attitude and high degree of repeat purchases leading to strong commitment to a brand, whilst having low relative attitude and high repeat patronage is regarded as spuriously loyal customers who tend to switch one brand to other causing more attractive prices, adverts and so on. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007)

		Repeat Patronage	
		High	Low
Relative Attitude	High	Loyalty	Latent Loyalty
	Low	Spurious Loyalty	No Loyalty

Figure 6: Brand Loyalty as a Function of Relative Attitude and Patronage Behaviour
Source: Schiffman and Kanuk (2007: 243)

2.3.5.3. Factors Affecting Loyalty

Pan et al. (2012) indicate theoretical framework where individual and products features interact and integrate to loyalty model towards a product. Further, Pan et al. (2012) analyse a number of factors which drive loyalty demonstrated in Figure 6.

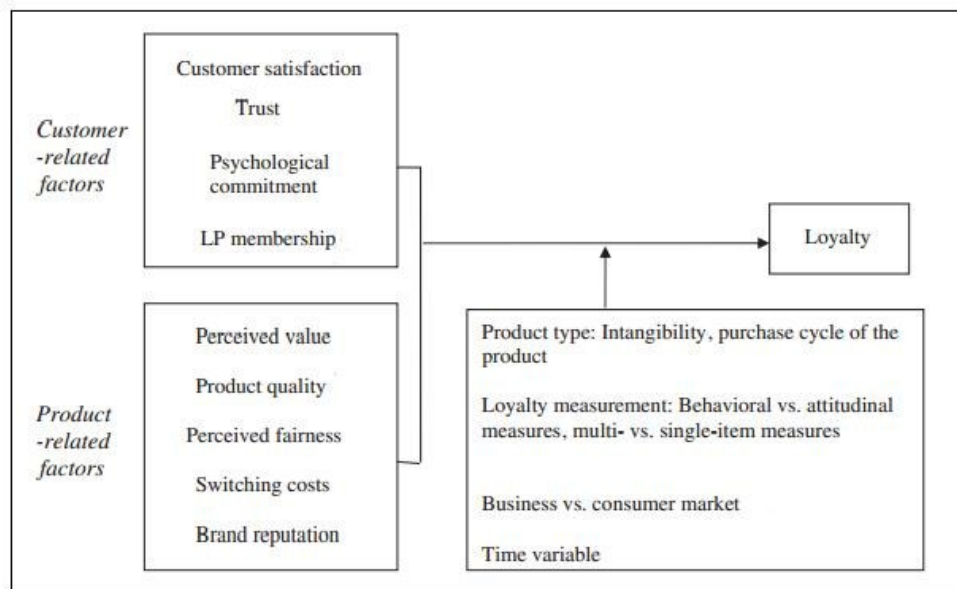


Figure 7: Conceptual Framework
Source: Pan et al. (2012: 151)

Customer-related factors and product-related factors described one by one:

- *Customer Satisfaction* (will be discussed in chapter 2.3.6.)
- *Trust*, considered as a major driver of loyalty (Pan et al.,2012) A consumer who trusts in a product tend to expand positive attitude toward it such as pay a premium price, to stay loyal and diffuse favourable word-of-mouth. (Pan et al.,2012)
- *Psychological Commitment* may be comprehended as a symbolic expression with a product which is necessary for loyalty to appear. (Pan et al.,2012) It is principal for successful long-term relationships due to large relational connection leading to more willing customers to invest a lot in their relationship with the seller. (Pan et al.,2012)
- *Loyalty Program Membership* invented to develop customer loyalty to advance customer shopping frequency and spending by remunerating their repeat

purchases (Ho et al., 2009) By providing benefits such as discounts, they may persuade customers to come back for additional purchase thus positively affect their relationship with firm. (Pan et al.,2012)

- *Perceived Value* of product specified by alliance with cost and product benefit which has an effect on customer purchase intention and behaviour. (Pan et al.,2012) Since perceive value of a product fill or overcome customer requirement thereupon customer regard product as worth buying. (Pan et al.,2012)
- *Product Quality* is fundamental issue for organizations in keeping competitive advantage due to strong impact on consumer purchase decisions. (Solomon, 2009) By offering product satisfying quality, the feelings of delight or enthusiasm might be evoked in customer mind which support to build the trust and may conclude in obdurate customer loyalty. (Pan et al.,2012)
- *Perceived Fairness* rests in comparison of customer impression of experience to their expectations. If a conflict with fairness occurs it may induce their dissatisfaction leading to loyalty defect. (Pan et al.,2012)
- *Switching Costs* were also determined by Aaker and McLoughlin (2010) as an aspect which drive brand loyalty. They might be considered as a way of maintain customers in relationship which make customers more dependent in other words there is no need to switch to another product. (Pan et al.,2012)
- *Brand Reputation* is often described as an instrument of loyal behaviour of a company. (Pan et al.,2012) According to Edlin and Harkin (2003) brand reputation is very often related to brand equity and its key dimensions. Customer is more likely to be interested in a brand with good reputation which will mitigate a perceived risk thus may cause favourable purchase and subsequent repeat purchase as well. (Pan et al.,2012)

2.3.6. Repeat purchase

The concept of repeat purchase is associated with areas which have been already discussed. Repeat purchase can be used for measuring of brand loyalty, which may be achieved by offering loyalty programs or having positive brand reputation or measuring of customer retention which brings high profitability. (Etter, 2005)

2.3.7. Customer Satisfaction

Very close connection between customer satisfaction, brand equity and brand loyalty has been detected above. Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) agree and also highlight the role of satisfaction as an important driver of customer loyalty which many companies try to increase it by investing in programs promoting loyalty. However, Souitaris and Balabanis (2007) argue that customer satisfaction does not always have to lead to brand loyalty, Solomon (2009) adds despite the satisfaction of customer needs they still may incline to brand switching to those, contained in their evoked set.

Grougiou and Pettigrew (2011) have researched in terms of clothing industry satisfaction with service interactions as fundamental aspect and grouped them into two main categories organizational attributes and staff attributes.

2.3.7.1. Organizational Attributes

Grougiou and Pettigrew (2011) have detected small, local and family business to be more willing to interact with customers than large and national companies for reasons being more honest in their interactions with their customers and not-behaving in agreement with pre-arranged service chance meeting as large firms tend to do. Although there is still attractiveness of large companies such as competitive prices, consumers frequently announced their willingness to switch economic benefits for convenience, consideration and understanding and also expressed great aversion to high pressure selling methods used by large organisations to capture more customers. (Grougiou and Pettigrew, 2011)

2.3.7.2. Staff Attributes

Grougiou and Pettigrew (2011) highlight customer priority to encounter competent and well-informed staff in stores otherwise poor customer service might cause stop shopping in a particular store as Sherman and Perlman (2007) noted.

Furthermore, there should have a respect to employees' age too. Younger employees inclined to have difficulties with interacting with older customers. (Grougiou and Pettigrew, 2011) This age barriers can be minimized by improving communication between these two groups. (Grougiou and Pettigrew, 2011) However, managers should not underestimate the importance of recruitment process in which they should consider social abilities and personality characteristics which participate in interaction of customers with staff. (Grougiou and Pettigrew, 2011)

The information conducted on the basis of literature review appertains to fashion sector providing some past theories to get overview of the of examined field, consumer behaviour and its influences, types and motives associated with buying, strongly affecting marketing communications including their techniques and last but not least knowledge regards the topic of brands by explaining many different connections which they have.

To sum up this chapter it is essential to mention the cohesion of fashion industry and brands as being main players, whereas the choice of particular brand is driven by many factors and motives which are hidden in every man and the role of marketer is to study consumer behaviour to reveal these issues.

Eventually it has brought adequate amount of knowledge conducive to comprehend following sections of this paper without any troubles.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the methods of data collection regarding this research are introduced. Subsequently data is to analyse objectives formulated in previous chapter.

3.2. Research Strategy

To collect the primary data which are necessary for this research a survey was chosen as a most appropriate strategy after contemplating other strategies. Easey (2009) considers survey research as the most well known data collection method. It is widely used for descriptive research and survey gather data from a representative sample chosen in virtue of research. (Easey, 2009) By survey, it is enabled to relatively quickly collect great number of data from a lot of people thereby validity is provided thus, it is seen as an advantage of this research strategy. (Saunders et al., 2003) Malhotra and Birks (2007) explain survey techniques which are mostly based on the application of structured questionnaires provided to a sample of population however Saunders et al. (2003) underline also the existence of two other important tools of data collection namely structured observation and structured interviews. Only technique related to the research will be discussed.

3.3. Research Method

3.3.1. Questionnaire

Malhotra and Birks (2008) define questionnaire as a structured technique for data collection which contains series of questions which might be inquired verbally, in writing or through computer. Malhotra and Birks (2008) introduced three specific objectives which every questionnaire has. Firstly, it is process of transferring the information need to a group of specific questions which will be replied by respondents although designing questions which in the way of obtaining desired information is found far from easy. (Malhotra and Birks, 2007) Secondly, a questionnaire must inspire

and persuade respondent to become engaged to collaborate and participate in the survey and finally, the error response should be decreased as much as possible in a questionnaire. (Malhotra and Birks, 2007) To avoid choosing incorrect sample in the questionnaire the filter question should be used as an initial question in order to confirm sufficient respondent awareness about the topic. (Malhotra and Birks, 2007)

There are two types of questionnaires. Firstly, self-administered questionnaire which is mostly filled in by respondents in version of online, postal or delivery and collection questionnaires, while interviewer-administered encompassing telephone questionnaire and structured interviews which are based on face-to-face communication of interviewer with respondents. (Saunders et al., 2003)

There are many types of questions which questionnaire can obtain nevertheless only some are discussed by reason being relevant to the study. Open-ended questions which request respondent's own answer, list questions offering the respondent the list of alternatives to choose with unlimited numbers of respondent's answers, category questions created to select just one answer and scale questions which measure respondent's opinion. (Saunders et al., 2003) Malhotra and Birks (2007) highlight some advantages of questionnaire. Firstly it is quite easily conducted; secondly, due to fixed-response questions answers are chosen from alternatives which will prevent from providing as variable responses as from interviews and finally, subsequent coding, analysing and interpreting of data are rather elementary. (Malhotra and Birks, 2007)

3.3.2. Interview

Saunders et al. (2003:242) state an interview as a purposeful discussion between two or more people. Using interview will help in collecting valid and reliable information concerning research question and objectives. (Saunders et al., 2003) There are three principal types of interviews. First, structured interview which using questionnaires with predetermined questions already explained above. (Saunders et al., 2003) In addition, Malhotra and Birks (2007) introduced structured interviews techniques and divided them into in-home, in-office, street or computer-assisted interview. By in-office interview more successful research may be achieved for reason that interviewed managers feel comfortable and secure in their office and they can even manage the

timing of interview. Furthermore, Malhotra and Birks (2007) point out main benefit which is possibility to build up a rapport and acquire full attention of the manager.

Secondly, semi-structured interview where interviewer having a list of topics and questions to be discussed might leave out or add some question in accordance to actual situation. (Saunders et al., 2003) Finally, unstructured interview also called in-depth where no predetermined list of questions are prepared, however interviewer has to have clear notion of all elements which want to discover. (Saunders et al., 2003)

Easey (2009) indicates some advantages of interview such as possible misunderstandings over questions may be discussed and explained, open-ended questions may be elaborately answered or interviewer can provide additional materials to express better the topic or the aim of entire study.

3.4. Chosen Research Methods

Due to variability of established objectives two research methods have been used in this research. First chosen method was questionnaire for mentioned advantages and as second method the interviews were selected. One of objectives was to research managerial view of customer loyalty and therefore interviews were found as appropriate technique how to analyse it. Other contributing factor for selection of interview is that researcher is employed in NEXT Plc which is found as a convenience for this research.

3.4.1. Design of Questionnaire

Primary research was made by questionnaire method to engage with as many customers of Next Plc as possible. Firstly, several social networks having fans, supporters and followers pages were used to post this questionnaire in order to hit desired samples which were customers of NEXT Plc. Due to extremely low response rate a different tactic has been launched. The questionnaires were provided customers via street interviews by the store to ensure target sample will be captured.

Different types of questions were used such as open-ended, list, category and scale. The questionnaire itself was divided into two parts which preceded filter question concerning inquire about being target sample of population. First series of questions

were about obliged personal information namely sex, age, where they live and two more optional about occupation and annual income were used. Second part of questionnaire was compound of 15 specific questions refer to the topic which were arisen from literature review regarding perception, purchase rate, customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction, factors affecting to make a purchase, loyalty, promotions, a variety of advertising tools and trust.

The questionnaire can be found in appendix A.

3.4.2. Pilot Study

The pilot study was accomplished for reasons to avoid misunderstandings by eliminating possible errors. Original questionnaires were tested on few people who were unaware of researcher's work to collect more critical and constructive feedback. Due to pilot study some questions were rephrased to be clearer and thus no misunderstandings could occur. At question regarding loyalty programs few alternatives were supplemented while question about advertising tools were split into two questions for more accurate analysis.

3.4.3. Sampling

The customers of NEXT Plc without reference to age, gender or occupation were selected as a suitable sample which is called non-probability sample. However, non-probability sampling depends on personal judgement of the researcher than on chance to select sample elements probability sample consists in chance. (Malhotra and Birks, 2007: 410) There are several techniques of non-probability sampling though only one has been considered as appropriate namely convenience sampling. Malhotra and Birks (2007) describe convenience sampling as techniques by which selection of sampling units is totally up to researcher and even if mostly researcher choose particular sampling units because they are in the right place at the right time. Furthermore, Malhotra and Birks (2007) underline that convenience sampling is the cheapest and the least time-consuming technique.

3.4.4. Interviews

Having no difficulty with making an appointment with managers of NEXT Plc, four of them were asked for interviews. Managers were inquired about several topics related to customer satisfaction, loyalty, perception, factors affecting purchase or advertising tools. For more details please see appendix B.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces data provided by primary research which was conducted among customers and managers of NEXT Plc. It is divided into following parts. First part regards profile of respondents in terms of demographic data. Latter considers results related to the subject of brand loyalty and also some additional results are provided in order to meet objectives in next chapter. Third part contains the results of interviews with managers of NEXT Plc.

4.2. Profile of Respondents

The research conducted by questionnaires was directly focused on customers of NEXT Plc, any group of age, gender or social class. Being customer particularly of NEXT was tested by first filter question already mentioned above. Due to unwillingness of respondents to share information about their occupation and annual income, these data will not be looked at.

Demographic data such as sex and age were taken in consideration while question inquired country of living was ignored in virtue of only 2 various respondents from UK. In spite of some barriers already described in previous chapter total researched sample was compound of 95 respondents. In most graphs especially in pie charts separate segment will contain 2 types of data, first is number of respondents answered so and second is percent portion of overall responds.

The Chart 1 provides gender composition of all respondents namely 14 males and 81 females which amounts 15% of all respondents were men and the rest of 85% women. For reason of small sample of males following analysis will not be allowed for gender composition.

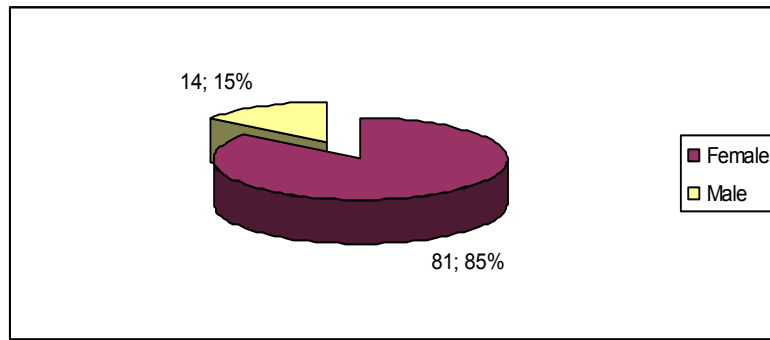


Chart 1: Gender Composition

Segmentation of respondents in terms of their age is demonstrated in the Chart 2 and brings subsequent data: 26% of respondents belonged to age group of 18-25, 19% were members of age group of 26-36, the largest category 31% was consist of customers being 36-45 years old, 12% of respondents come under age group of 46-55 and last category 9% was represented by participants of 56-65 age.

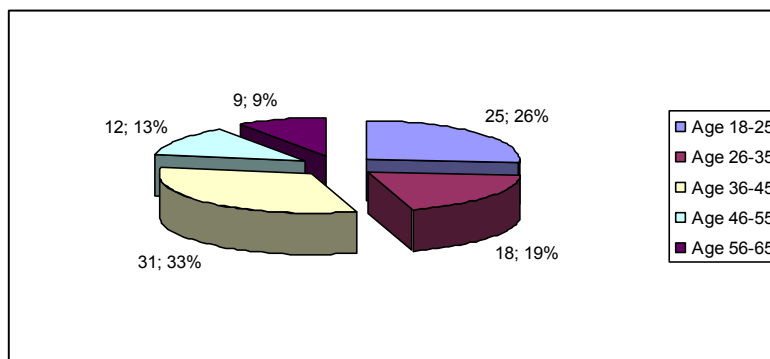


Chart 2: Age Segmentation of All Respondents

4.3. Findings Related to Brand Loyalty

Second part of this chapter will bring specific data regarding perception, customer satisfaction, most affecting factors when making a purchase, degree of customer loyalty, the efficiency of advertising tools on customer decision and trust in brand which were respondents inquired about.

4.3.1. Customer Perception

First question exhibited in the Chart 3 was to explore customer perception of NEXT as a brand thereof 90% had positive associations connected with the brand, only 1% had negative feeling and 9% had neutral view of NEXT brand in general.

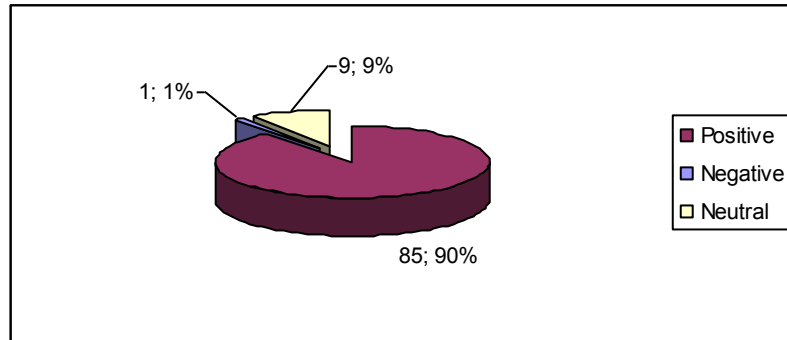


Chart 3: Perception of NEXT as a Brand

4.3.2. The Shopping

The Chart 4 represents information how many respondents mostly found what they were looking for by 92% and 8% stated having difficulties with finding desired items.

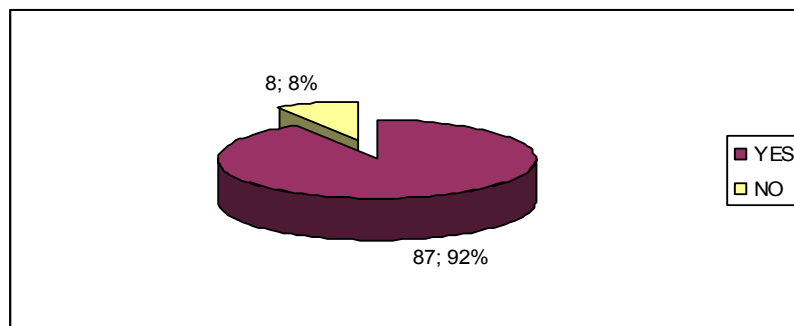


Chart 4: Have you mostly found what you were looking for?

Customer frequency of shopping in NEXT is illustrated in the Chart 5 which show 39% participants are going shopping weekly subsequently 25% expressed a need for shopping 2-3 times per month, 24% answered 3-6 times per half a year and 12% of them go shopping 1-2 times per half a year.

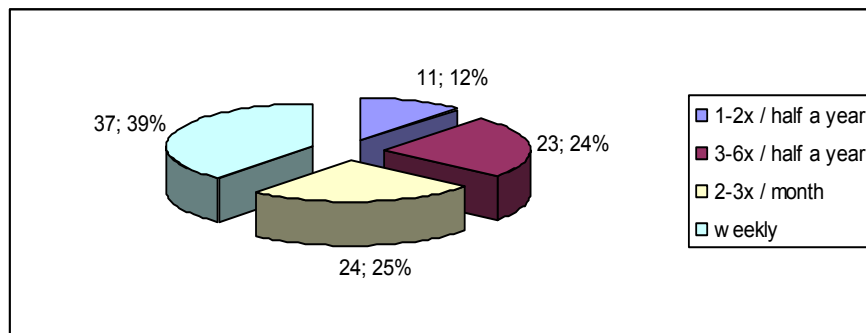


Chart 5: Frequency of Shopping

Another question was related to entire customer satisfaction with NEXT Plc displayed in the Chart 6. 18% of customers implied strong satisfaction, 53% were satisfied, 23% of respondents manifested quite satisfaction, 4% expressed slightly satisfaction, 0% of participants being rarely satisfied and only 1% of not satisfied at all.

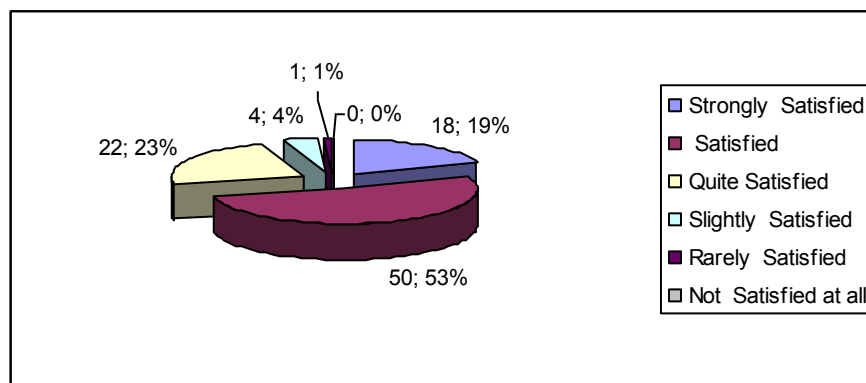
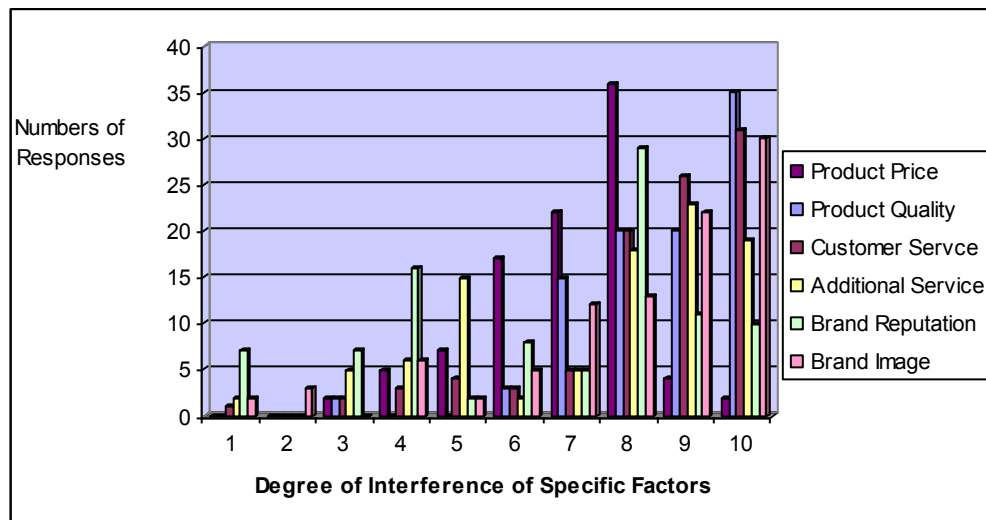


Chart 6: Degree of Satisfaction

4.3.3. Factors Affecting Purchase

On the basis of literature review several factors were provided to be evaluated in terms of their influence on making a purchase in NEXT as summarized in the Graph 3. The scale was as following: 1- factor does not affect me, 10- it strongly affects me when making a purchase. To evaluate degree of interference each factor was scaled separately. By 38% of customers product price was evaluated by number 8. 33% of participants rated product quality by 10 and customer service likewise by 33% of them.

Additional service was mostly assessed at 9 by 24% of all customers. Brand Reputation got most frequently 8 by 31% and 32% of respondents scored brand image by 10.



Graph 3: Degree of Interference of Specific Factors when Making a Purchase

To identify most affecting factors points system has been used which provided following findings. After awarding points average value of each factor has been examined as Table 1 shows.

Product Price	Product Quality	Customer Service	Additional Service	Brand Reputation	Brand Image
6,96	8,62	8,38	7,41	6,48	7,98

Table 1: Average Value of Specific Factors

Furthermore, data was processed and the most affecting factors were analysed in the Chart 7. Product quality is most concerned in making a purchase by 20% followed by customer service with 18%, brand image with 17%, additional service with 16%, product price with 15% and last brand reputation with 14%.

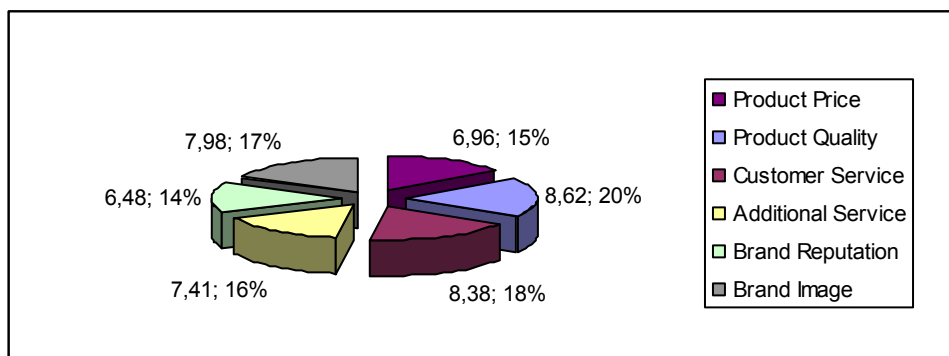


Chart 7: Average Value of Interference when Making a Purchase for Each Factor

4.3.4. Customer Loyalty

Next part of questionnaire includes section regarding loyalty. Firstly, customers were asked to evaluate their loyalty to NEXT in terms of the scale 1- not loyal at all until 10- strongly loyal. For less complicated later analysis the degree of loyalty was divided into groups in terms of scoring as follows. Number 10 was indicated strongly loyal respondents. In category 8-9 loyal customers were classified. Those, rated 6-7 points belong to group of quite loyal. Respondents evaluated by 4-5 points were placed in classification of slightly loyal. Having 3 points pertain to rarely loyal participants and scoring by 1-2 points comprises not-loyal-at-all category.

The Chart 8 manifests the degree of loyalty perceived by customers themselves. 5% of respondents felt as strongly loyal. Customers who marked themselves loyal were 32%. Being quite loyal was expressed by 34% participants. As slightly loyal 11% of customers were detected. Rare degree of loyalty was qualified at 13% of respondents while not being loyal at all only 5% of all customers were discovered.

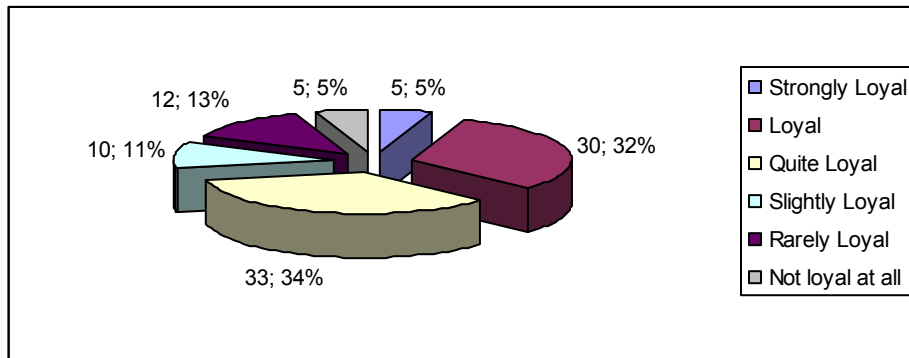


Chart 8: Degree of Loyalty

Secondly, question considering customers attitude to participating in loyalty membership was asked. The Chart 9 exhibits results such as 48% of all customers would like to join loyalty membership or program in NEXT, if there is any. Further, 28% of those, who are not interested and 24% of respondents had neutral attitude.

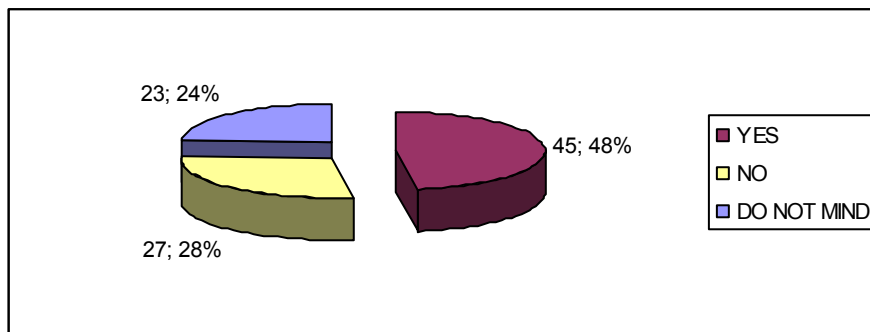


Chart 9: A need for Loyalty Membership

Subsequently, those, having a need for participation with NEXT were asked about desired benefits expected from this membership. On this question 43% of respondents answered they would like to have discounts on products. To obtain vouchers for next purchase 24% of customers gave approval and 33% of them expressed interest in collecting points as the Chart 10 illustrates. Any other type of benefits has not been determined in spite of providing question about additional one.

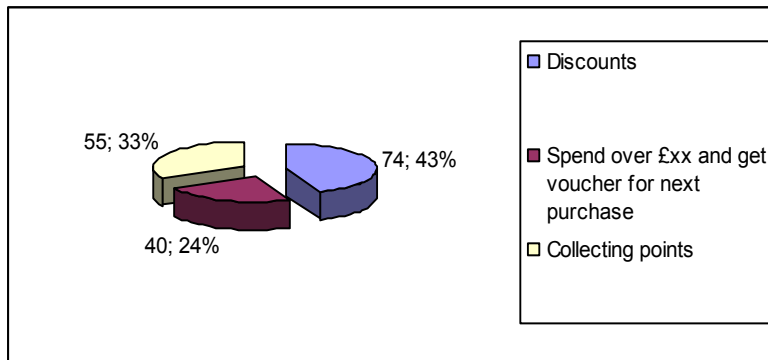


Chart 10: Benefits from Loyalty Membership

Furthermore, respondents were inquired about being members of loyalty programs regarding clothing retailers. The Chart 11 figures that 23% of customers are already members of some loyalty programs and 77% of them have no such as membership.

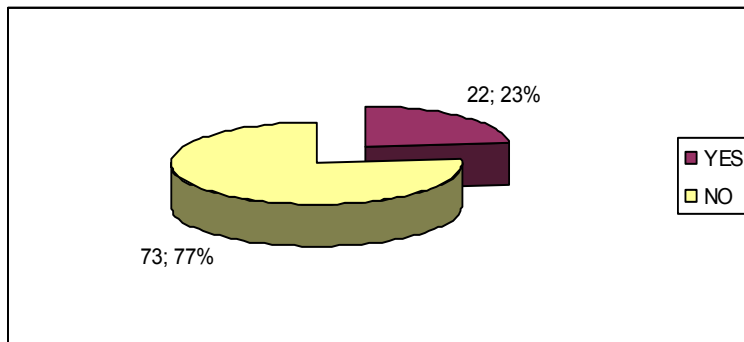


Chart 11: Being Member of Loyalty Programs regarding Clothing Retailers

4.3.5. Promotion and Advertising

Further couples of questions refer to promotion and advertising tools of NEXT Plc. First question of this section was about having sufficiently strong promotion demonstrated in the Chart 12. Strong enough promotion is perceived by 78% of customers on the other hand 22% of them have opposite opinion.

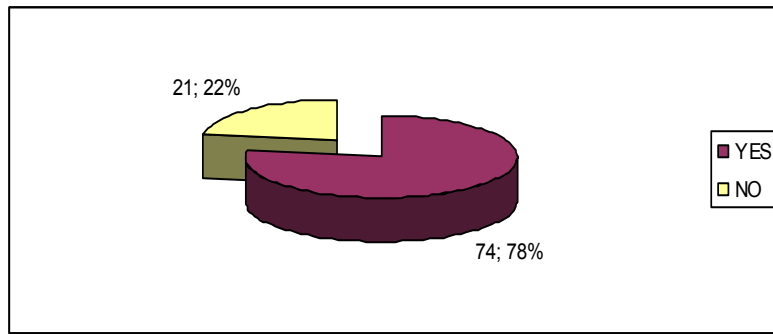


Chart 12: Has NEXT strong enough promotion?

Another question considering promotion was about an awareness of any advertising tools used by NEXT. The Chart 13 presents 78% of all respondents are aware of some advertising tools while 16% of customers disregarded them.

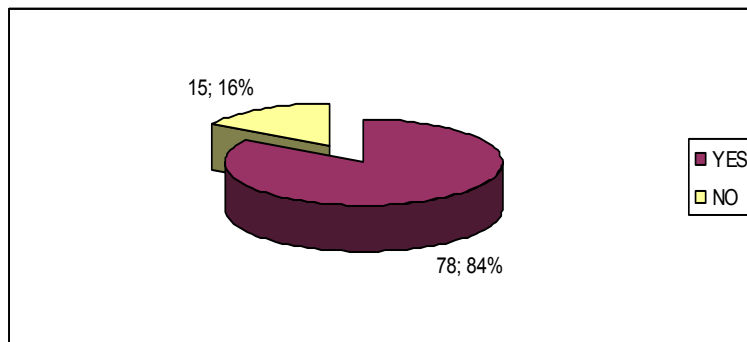


Chart 13: Are Aware of Any Advertising Tools regarding NEXT Plc?

Last question concerning promotion was to evaluate degree of influence of advertising tools. The scale was provided as 1-do not affect until at all, 5- strongly affect. In consequence, all tools were awarded points and average mean of influence on customer considering each element specifically was analysed as the Table 2 manifests.

TV	Outdoor Advertising	Internet	Catalogues	Magazines & Newspapers
2,6	2,21	3,04	2,43	2,69

Table 2: Average Rate of Each Advertising Tool

The Chart 14 depicts Internet with 23% of influence on customers, secondly magazines and newspapers with 21%, thirdly TV having 20% of influence on participants, fourthly catalogues with 19% and finally outdoor advertising providing 17% of entire influence on respondents.

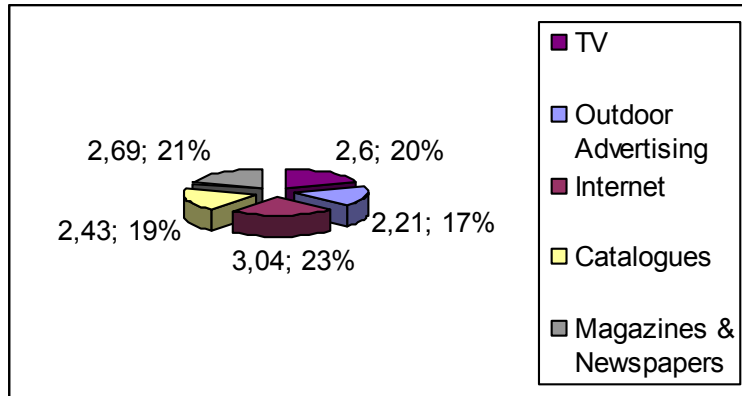


Chart 14: Influence of Advertising Tools on Customers of NEXT Plc

4.3.6. Trust

As a last section of questionnaire were two questions concerning customer trust in brand and word-of-mouth communication.

Customers were inquired about having any physical commitment with a brand represented by trust. The Chart 15 demonstrates that the brand is trusted by 92% of customers and only 8% of them do not trust in NEXT Plc.

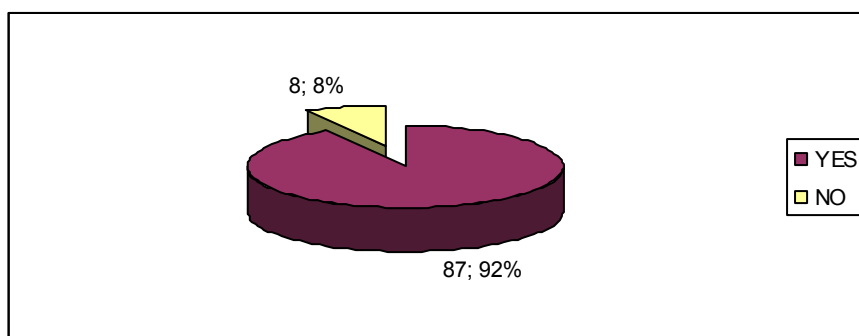


Chart 15: Do You Trust in NEXT Brand?

Last question of questionnaire was about recommendation others to go shopping in NEXT. The chart 16 illustrates that 94% of all respondents would recommend others to go shopping in NEXT while only 6% of all participants had opposite opinion.

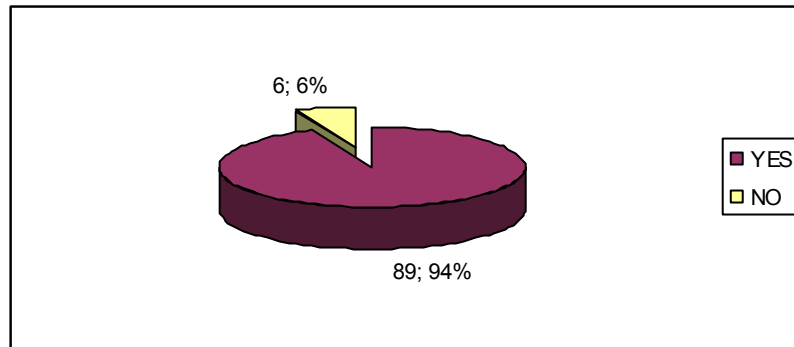


Chart 16: Recommendation Others to Go Shopping in NEXT

4.3.7. Additional Finding Resulting from Primary Research

To analyse determined objectives some additional results especially charts and graphs will be exhibited however, they are to be discussed and explained in chapter 5.

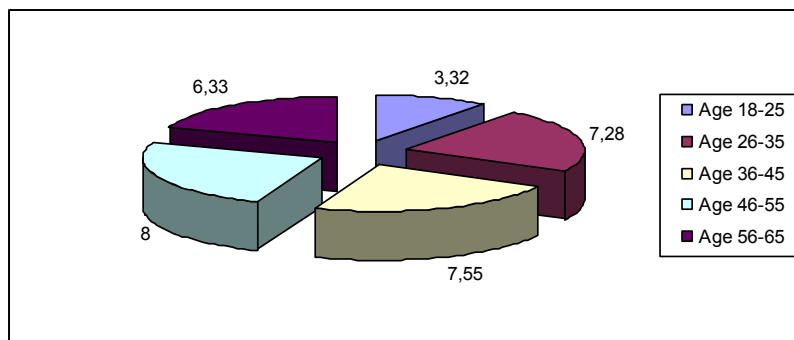
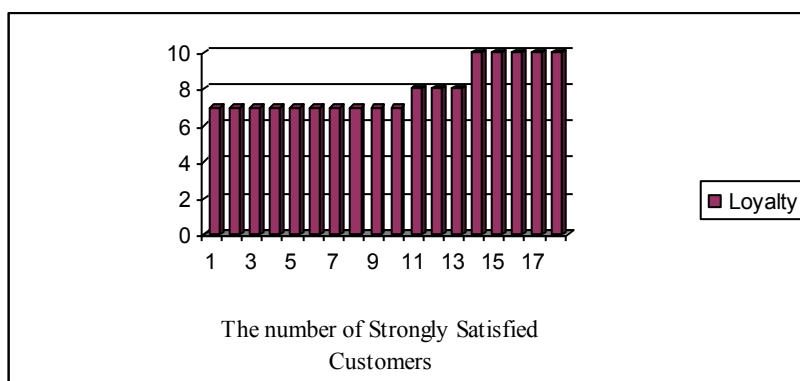


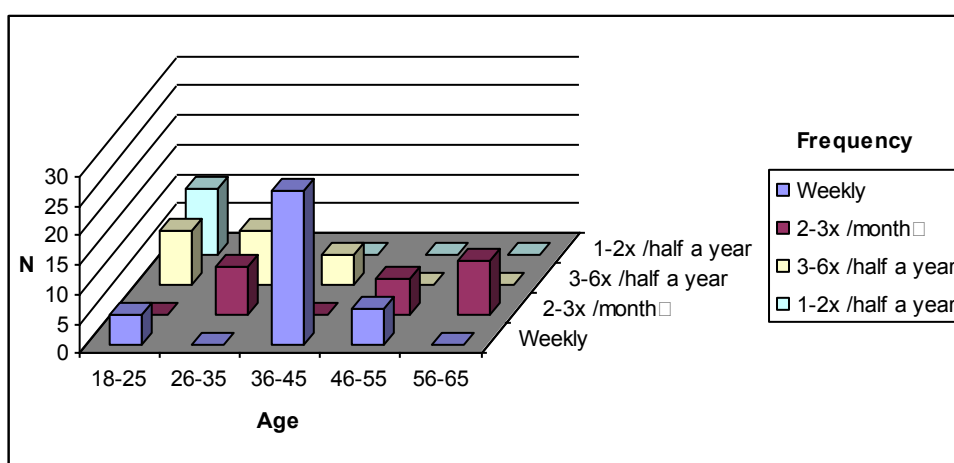
Chart 17: Arithmetic Mean of Loyalty in terms of Age

All Customers	6,3
Satisfied and Strongly Satisfied	7,34
Strongly Satisfied	8

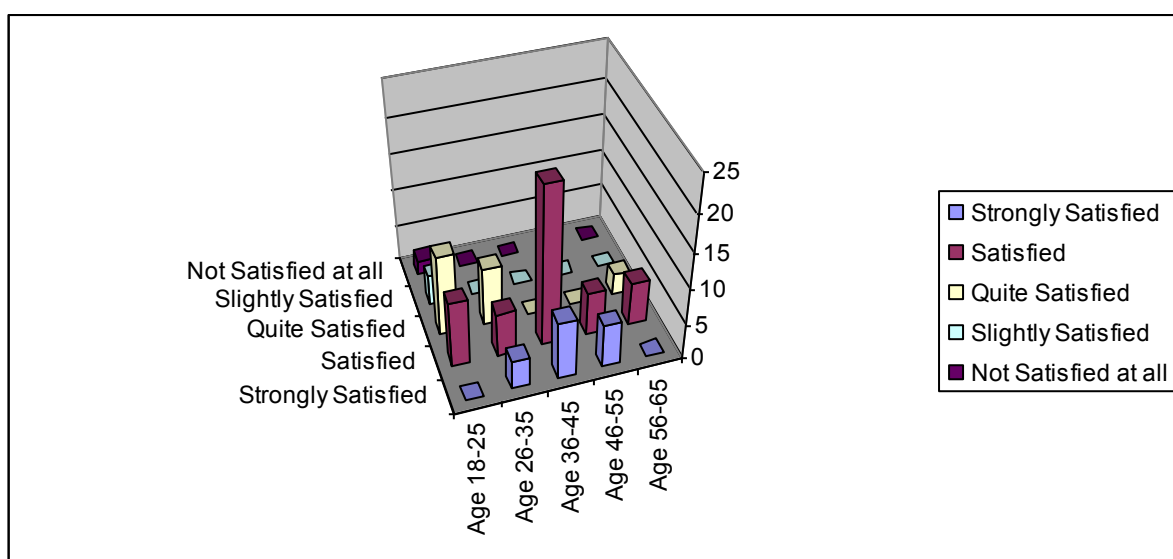
Table 3: The Average Mean of Loyalty



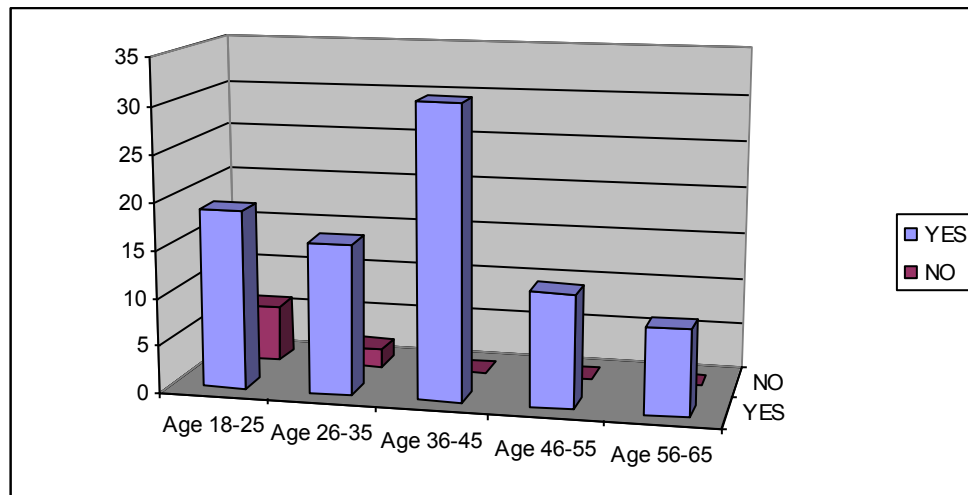
Graph 4: The Degree of Loyalty Strongly Satisfied Customers



Graph 5: Frequency of shopping in terms of age



Graph 6: Degree of Satisfaction in terms of Age



Graph 7: Trust in terms of Age

4.4. Results Concerning Interviews

The aim of interviews with managers has been already described above. There were four separate interviews accomplished whereas each was consisted of 11 questions of various types. Due to relatively small amount of obtained rapidly variable data and also mutually complementary information, interviewees' responses will be presented together thus complex view is expected to reach.

4.4.1. Customer Perception

First, the managers were asked if customers have positive perception of NEXT. All of them strongly agreed and gave several reasons for their statement. According to managers positive perception is encouraged by fact that, customers keep returning to the stores as it has been observing during their carriers in NEXT Plc. Other outcome of positive perception was aspect such as brand reputation associated with long-standing tradition of the company which helps to intensify the strength of brand which has retroactively positive impact on customer perception. As final important aspect affecting customer perception is considered the comfort of high-quality goods which NEXT provides.

4.4.2. Factors Affecting Purchase

Managers were also inquired about general factors affecting making a purchase similarly as customers besides brand image. The scale of interference was the same as previous time 1- factor does not affect, 10- strongly affect making a purchase. Most highly evaluated were two factors such as customer service and brand reputation with 10 points. As a second, product quality was placed with score of 8 points followed by product price and additional service with 7 points. Furthermore, question regarding evaluation of customer service specifically in NEXT occurred. Customer service of NEXT's company was appreciated in terms of competitors by 9 points.

4.4.3. Customer Loyalty

Other couples of questions were inquired about customer loyalty. On the question "Do you think customers are loyal to NEXT?" All four replied positively and several arguments were introduced. First of all, customer service was again highlighted as a crucial implication in building relationship with customers. Secondly, the value of offered goods is also connected with loyalty because customer requires product price accordant with product quality.

Another question was related to the fact of having no loyalty programs in NEXT. All four managers expressed interest in introduction of loyalty membership in the company as they believe in strengthening bond among the company and customers which will have positive impact on the NEXT brand in general. In terms of benefits receiving from loyalty membership all agree with discounts and collecting points from which consequently customer can choose a type of benefit which suits his or her desires.

Last issue regarding loyalty was inquired about how else it is possible to gain customer loyalty. All managers by replying on this question summarized fundamental steps which must not be ignored otherwise company success is fatally jeopardized. Strategic moves how to keep customer loyalty are having as highly standard customer service as possible, paying attention to the value of product and finally using adequate promotion which is heading towards next series of questions.

4.4.4. Promotion

Last group of question is involved in promotion and advertising of the NEXT brand. All questions will be introduced and discussed at once in order to entire overview of this issue.

First question was applied to matter of having sufficiently strong promotion, second to types of used advertising tools by NEXT and their efficiency. All of managers were inclined to negative answers in terms of adequate strength of current promotion for following reasons. They consider that advertising tools which are using are not fully used. TV adverts are not catchy enough or their frequency is quite low thus customer does not often have to even note them. Another tool is magazines which tend to meet their objectives while catalogues provided by NEXT are loosing their popularity apparently owing to the internet. There are several improvements suggested by mangers in order to develop promotion and thus spread overall awareness of the NEXT brand. Despite very good official web sites the company should more focus on promoting the stores itself than the web sites as recently happening. Nowadays the company tends to give priority to online shopping than classic shopping in person in the stores whereby use many resources which might be helpful anywhere else particularly in the stores to provide customers better comfort of shopping. The company is quite oblivious of advertising all departments of whole brand, not just mainly promoted one namely ladieswear as lately. In terms of efficiency of used advertising tools they are considered by managers as to be worked although, they should be reformed to enhance the object of interest.

5. DISSCUSION

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this part is to discuss and analyse results introduced in the previous chapter in order to meet determined objectives. Analysing objectives help to accomplish the overall aim of this dissertation to investigate the key drivers affecting brand loyalty in relation to Next Plc. There have been stated four objectives which would be researched separately. The fifth considering managerial view will be integrated in prior ones and discussed in conjunction with literature in order to acquire entire overview on given matter.

5.2. Analysing Objectives

5.2.1. To research a degree of customer satisfaction and loyalty to NEXT Plc

Very high degree of satisfied customers in NEXT Plc was identified as it was demonstrated in the Chart 6 in previous section. Average degree of satisfaction concerning all customers was detected as 8,2 which seems to be very good. The fact that, over two thirds of all respondents were satisfied or strongly satisfied brings to the company very positive findings. On the basis of literature review close connection between customer satisfaction and loyalty has been discovered and supported by several authors however, some raised doubts (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010; Souitaris and Balabanis, 2007) Entire degree of loyalty in NEXT Plc was 6,3 as Table 3 illustrates which is notably lower than firstly examined satisfaction. Moreover, other analysis was accomplished on impulse to prove if some rapport between satisfaction and loyalty really exists in this fashion environment whereas findings confirmed strong relation. Whilst total degree of loyalty of all customers was not particularly high when only satisfied and strongly satisfied customers are considered the degree of loyalty has largely increased to the number 8. Also all these satisfied and strongly satisfied respondents had positive perception and put their trust in the brand which promote the view of Nam et al. (2011) the customer loyalty becomes the stronger the better

experiences with the brand customers have and afterwards they incline to get engaged in positive word-of-mouth communication by recommendation to go shopping in Next Plc to their friends, relatives and so on. Furthermore, author would like to remark that this positive recommendation has been acknowledged by absolute majority of respondents what give the company certain competitive advantage by achieving this most powerful tool of promotion as Chris (2009) stated. To detect only 'purely' loyal customers without spurious loyal included as Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) determined a method of surveying such as evaluation of own loyalty by customers themselves was chosen on purpose thus customers prone to brand-switching were excluded. Another competitive advantage has appeared from acquiring such a degree of loyalty and satisfaction because these customers reduce risk and variability of the business which brings shareholders required benefits and profitability. (Torres and Tribo, 2011) Such ability of reducing this variability is especially beneficial in fashion industry which has been detected as extremely instable and erratic by several authors. (Sherman and Perlman, 2007; Power and Hauge, 2008) Also propitious obtained data from research about relatively high degree of loyalty and satisfaction are substantiated by managers who classified their customers as loyal for reasons of their repeat purchases which were also confirmed by providing information about NEXT Plc as being second biggest UK clothing retailer and also second most visited in terms of purchase-making in UK. (Mintel, 2011)

5.2.2. To analyse and evaluate factors driving customer loyalty

On the basis of literature several factors were provided to customers to evaluate in terms of degree of their interference. Due to investigation into all possible affecting aspects one question was given in order to indicate additional factor of own choice. No respondent expressed preferences of any other aspect whereby all provided factors were found by author of research sufficient which brought no need for follow-up study in any other drivers. The affecting factors were identified as product price, product quality, customer service, additional service, brand reputation and finally brand image. (Pan et al., 2012; Clodfelter, 2009; Solomon and Rabolt, 2009) Again same scale to evaluate their level of affection was provided. The most affecting factor has been analysed as product quality followed by customer service, brand image, additional service, product price and finally brand reputation. In virtue of placing product quality by customers on

the top Next Company might be much ahead over competitors for reason that Solomon (2009) sees offering high-quality products fundamental issue for organizations in acquiring and keeping competitive advantage due to strong impact on consumer purchase decisions. Further, offering products highly satisfying quality it is important because it might evoke delight or enthusiasm in consumer mind which raise the origin of trust which may lead to customer loyalty in the future. (Pan et al.,2012) The customer service was seated as second most affecting in making a purchase. Many authors give to this factor paramount importance. It is essential for running a successful business on grounds of poor customer service has been detected as most frequent reason for stop shopping in particular retail chain. (Sherman and Perlman, 2007) High ranking of this factor encouraged a need for nice, polite, well-experience and skilled assistance as it has been raised by Clodfelter (2009) above. Brand image was appraised as third most affecting factor which represents a certain physical commitment to the brand understood as symbolic expression and connection with personality what many respondents expressed by very positive perception with the Next brand. (Pan et al.,2012) Forth most affecting aspect was selected by customer as additional service considering for example delivery, catalogue orders or online shopping which Next Plc provide in global scope. This rating could be evocated by great use of additional service by NEXT's customers as already mentioned. Moreover Clodfelter (2009) underlines that using additional service is smart method for distinguishing company from its competitors. Next to last the product price has been placed indicating that customers do not concern about price a lot despite the NEXT is not considered as one of the cheapest clothing retailers on the market which may signify a brand loyal customer base who are willing to pay slightly more for the product of particular brand similar benefits as substitutes. (Aeker, 1996) Finally, brand reputation was placed. Recently it is crucial for companies to obtain well-reputed name which helps to eliminate perceived risk of purchase. Furthermore, the brand having more well-built reputation becomes more attractive for many customers heading towards their sequent purchase-making. (Pan et al.,2012) Although, brand reputation was chosen as the least affecting factor it does not infer the lack of brand strength of NEXT Plc. Author would like to alert to all factors were top-rated evincing still great influence on customers when making a purchase resulting from very positive

brand perception and also the fact that NEXT brand was trusted by practically all respondents.

In contrast to managers' point of view the most affecting factor was the very brand reputation apparently caused due to strength of the brand. By putting brand reputation on last position customers expressed that the aspects persuading them to make a repeat purchase are provided product quality along with customer service which have been found as fundamental issue in relation to NEXT Plc.

5.2.3. To examine the influence of marketing communications on customers

Marketing communications play a principle role in the process of interaction between company and customers whereas the key issue for creating awareness about brand is promotion. (Rosenbaum-Elliot, Percy & Pervan, 2011) Firstly, it is important to find out the volume of NEXT's promotion and how much customers are aware of it. Approximately three quarters of all respondents considered the promotion of NEXT Plc as sufficient. However, one third of respondents had different opinion and further around 10% of customers were not aware of any advertising tools at all. Several advertising tools used by NEXT Plc were subsequently provided to customers in order to evaluate them in terms of their influence. As results presented in the Table 2 the influence of provided tools on customer was identified in following order: internet, magazines, TV, catalogues and finally outdoor advertising with lowest influence. No wonder that internet was found as media having strongest influence due to recent huge progress. A fundamental feature of internet is easy and quick way gaining desired information as it has been already said above. (Bianco, no date) The popularity of this media in terms of NEXT Plc is also encouraged by manager's arguments about online shopping via web sites which company give precedence over stores in promoting. Another fact there are so many clients who subscribed in as already mentioned. Magazines, managers expressed positively about them concerning their efficiency and also they were found as method how to successfully reach target customers with high-quality presentation. (Arens, 2002) TV adverts were already signified by managers as not very catchy which might be caused by flooding of TV adverts in recent years.

Further catalogues were fourth most affecting, which are lately losing their popularity probably owing to internet boom. Finally, outdoor advertising on last position what might be evoked by lack of stress putting on such billboards or posters outside of the stores. It has been already implied by managers that promoting of stores itself is highly requested to intensify thus this influence obviously came as last one.

To select appropriate techniques of communications is fatal for company to correctly identify target group in order to have sequent efficient communication with them such as directly centred marketing campaigns on certain target segment. (Hill and Beery, 2009) Eventually is relevant to mention one more communication tool such as word-of-mouth as already noted leading to crucial impact on the brand itself but on customer minds too. (Chris, 2009) The existence of this communication tool was approved already signified extremely high percentage of recommendation concerning shopping in NEXT Plc by customers.

5.2.4. To define core customers of NEXT Plc on the basis of ascertained loyalty and satisfaction.

Additional findings brought graphs considering degree of satisfaction and loyalty segmented by age. One fundamental finding was analysed. According to this study customers younger than 25 years old were found latent loyal or not loyal at all as Chart 17 exhibits. They tend to switch brand very frequently for possible reason as gaining constantly new experience and being loyal is seen as the sign of inflexibility and stereotype. (Solomon and Rabolt, 2009)

In consequence, as the core customers being the brand trustees with positive perception, most frequent shoppers, most satisfied and loyal to the brand women of age 35-45 years old were researched (see Chart 17, Graphs 4-6). This result harmonizes with brand promotion and advertising which is focus on mainly ladieswear regarding women of similar age as managers mentioned.

However author would like to highlight that this finding might be imprecise due quite small sample of various age respondent.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Introduction

This last chapter of this dissertation is split into three sections. First one brings several recommendations which were emerged from shortcomings detected by primary research. Latter is to draw the conclusion of overall study and in third part limitations of the study will be provided.

6.2. Contribution of the Study to the Literature and Implications for Management Practice

On the basis of research some shortcomings have been discovered. Firstly, there is no loyalty membership or programs for customers of NEXT Plc. whereas such programs have been detected as methods for developing and advancing of customer loyalty by which additional purchases are proceed and also the relationship between customer and company became stronger. (Ho et al., 2009) Due to research half of respondents would like to join some membership and another one quarter of them has neutral attitude evincing possible accession in the future leading to large amount of participants joining the NEXT chain which is very likely to increase even more a degree of loyalty of customers. Previous research determined desired benefits of this membership such as discounts, collecting points and vouchers for next purchase if particular amount spent. All types aroused concern and curiosity especially benefits providing discounts. This concept was also encouraged by all mangers because they believe in boosting relationship between the company and customers furthermore, having the more loyal customers the bigger competitive advantage will be inevitable achieved which will have huge affirmative impact on the company as a whole. In consequence, higher profitability causes more financial resources to spend for marketing campaigns, creating new collections of apparel, improvements in distribution, turning stores in being more attractive or offering better standards than ever before in general.

Secondly, promotion is to be reformed. The main focus on modern media such as internet has to spread also on other branding and advertising techniques. In these days

when bulk amount of adverts trying to penetrate customer decisions it is far from easy to invent such extraordinary advert catching and sinking in their minds. This mission can be accomplished if celebrity endorsement comes to be exploited. Due to popularity of celebrities many customers might be influenced and thus the commitment to the brand has been launched. (Gale et al, 2004) This commitment is also associated with building trust which can be later transformed in loyalty to company. In addition, a variety of advertising methods is available on the market. Using local radio stations if new store is to open, sales are intended to start or jut daily brand promotion in general.

Two main recommendations have been described in order to minimise and defuse current deficiencies thereby company's position can be improved and strengthened in this very changeable fashion industry.

6.3. Summary of Results and Findings

The aim of this paper was to investigate the key drivers which affect the most in relation to Next Plc. To fulfil this aim several objectives were determined. All of them were clearly analysed through the use of research consisting questionnaires and interviews. Firstly, the degree of loyalty and satisfaction needed to be determined subsequently very satisfied and loyal customer base was found. Secondly, an analysis and evaluation of factors affecting brand loyalty was undertaken. Customers have chosen product quality followed by customer service as most affecting when making a purchase in Next Plc while product price has been surprisingly found not as important. This fact reflects the existence of loyal customer base. Thirdly, advertising tools use by Next has been rated in terms of their interference and no wonder internet has been detected as the most affective one. On the grounds of research the most loyal and satisfied customers having very positive brand perception has been identified as a core customers. In addition, the different level of brand loyalty has been disclosed in terms of demographic data specifically age. Young customers under 25 years old has been identified as latent loyal or even not loyal at all. Brand loyalty particularly in fashion industry which is so variable and instable environment can be crucial issue for keeping and strengthening position on the market thus having a competitive advantage. To become a player on fashion market it is needed to take into account that it is very tough game due to fast changing trends and fact what is stylish today does not mean it still will be tomorrow. This fact is encouraged by another quote regarding fashion industry from one of the most famous and successful world entrepreneur

“It’s all about good taste.”

Giorgio Armani

For these reasons having strongly loyal customer base therefore company should try do maximum in order to gain and keep loyal customers by virtue of all marketing techniques or by identifying their needs and sequentially provide them desired products and services which enforce their trust and satisfaction.

Eventually, it is fundamental to point out there are many factors which affect brand loyalty from trust, customer satisfaction and after various advertising and branding techniques for example attractive actor has appeared in TV adverts, although product quality and customers service have been determined as the most important and affecting ones when making a purchase regarding customers of Next Plc.

6.4. Limitations of Study

Some limitations concerning survey have arisen. Researcher's expectations about numbers of response from online questionnaires were much higher. Despite continual and repeat inserting the link to online questionnaire on fan page of NEXT Plc extremely low response rate was achieved. Several social networks were used in order to break this barrier however unsuccessful outcome was reached again. Due to insufficient capabilities of application, which were used to create online questionnaire, at some questions scale had to be decreased from ten to five, which might bring some inaccuracy such as differences among categories will not be so obvious after analysing these questions.

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